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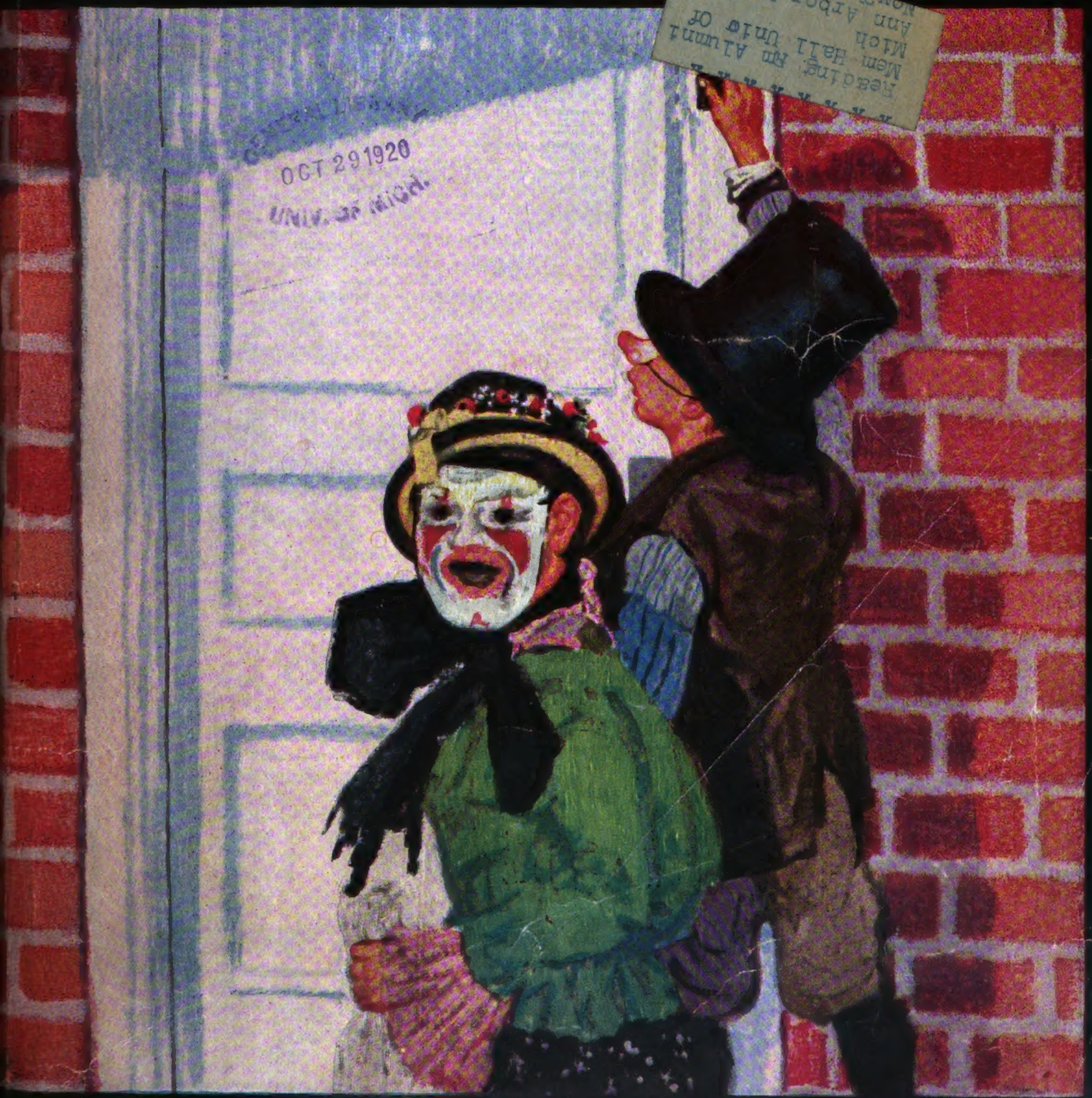

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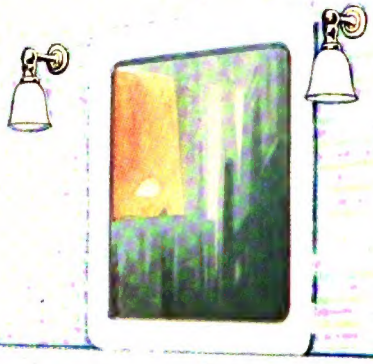

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Everybody's Magazine
NUMBER FOUR OCTOBER, 1920 VOLUME XLIII

Which Road, Folks?

By William Brown Meloney

IN FEBRUARY last, when overnight President Wilson scrapped Robert Lansing as Secretary of State, he wrote a letter to Lansing saying that he was getting rid of him in order "to select some one whose mind would more willingly go along with mine."

Lansing, not only, of course, as Secretary of State, but also by special executive appointment, had been an official representative of the United States at the Paris peace conference. As our accredited delegate and representative he had, among other things, opposed the relegation of the Monroe Doctrine to the weird and extra-international category of "regional understandings." He had protested, too, against the rape of helpless China by militant Japan in the Shantung settlement. His consciousness of responsibility to the people of the United States had, at least in those two instances, refused to let his mind go along with the President's.

With the purpose of making clear that his dismissal was in no wise due to either misfeasance or malfeasance in office, and at the same time rendering a report of his handling of the great public trust which he was about to quit, Lansing let the country have the President's letter demanding his resignation and his answer. So at last the nation was in a position to find, by direct rather than by the processes of circumstantial evidence, that the chief of its executive department was a man who would hold neither commerce nor counsel with anybody whose mind did not willingly go along with his.

The Democratic Promise

JUNE brought us the Democratic convention in San Francisco and the selection by Mr. Wilson's party of some one to succeed him as a standard-bearer and chief and, perhaps, as President. Mr. Wilson let it be known, the party managers gave it out, that the convention was to be absolutely free of his domination. And despite the fact that the key-note speech of the convention fixed President Wilson as one with the immortals, and despite the platform indorsing his every act, which the convention adopted, we were inclined not to disbelieve the party managers. Politicians and a varied experience have taught us to be rather cynical about key-note speech laudations and platform pledges.

As the convention pursued its course into July, refusing to nominate the President's son-in-law, William G. McAdoo, or Josephus Daniels, his Secretary of the Navy, or Bainbridge Colby, who succeeded Lansing as Secretary of State, or A. Mitchell Palmer, his Attorney-General, or Newton D. Baker, his Secretary of War, or any of the other administration stronghearts, our hope mounted accordingly. With the nomination of James Middleton Cox, of Ohio, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and a cousin of the late Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, apparently as free and unbossed acts, it seemed as if the Democratic party had done something worthy of sincere congratulation. Experience, however, as well as teaching one to mistrust key-note speeches and platform pledges, also teaches one not to be too hasty in congratulation. Taking advantage of this experience, we restrained our congratulatory impulse until July eighteenth, when, by invitation or understanding, Governor Cox and his running-mate, Mr. Roosevelt, foregathered with President Wilson at the White House.

Cox and Wilson Foregather

AND it was well, we think, that we had withheld our congratulations, for on the morning of July nineteenth we read with the rest of the country that Mr. Wilson had found in Governor Cox and in Mr. Roosevelt two more minds which most willingly would go along with his.

As to what took place at that conference between the President and the two nominees we have no other means of knowing than what the participants themselves have revealed. For a moment let your mind go along with theirs.

President Wilson said:

"The interview was in every respect most satisfactory and gratifying. *I found, what I indeed already knew* and what Governor Cox has let the whole world know in his speeches, *that he and I were absolutely at one* with regard to the great issue of the League of Nations, and that he is ready to be the champion in every respect of the honor of the nation and the secure peace of the world. . . ."

Governor Cox said:

"From every view-point the meeting was delightful. . . . *We* (that is the President and Governor Cox) are agreed as to the meaning and sufficiency of the Democratic platform and the duty of the party in the face of threatened bad faith to the world in the name of America. . . . As the leader of the nation who asked for our sons and our resources upon a very distinct understanding and obligation, he is resolved that the faith shall be kept. To this his thought and life are dedicated. What he promised I shall, if elected, endeavor with all my strength to give."

Mr. Roosevelt said:

"I wish that every American could have been a silent witness to the meeting between these two great men. Their splendid accord and their high purpose are an inspiration. . . ."

Its Ominous Meaning

WHAT does that mean, folks? Does it mean that Governor Cox intends, if elected, to continue the strange, personal and unconstitutional form of government which has been imposed upon the United States since March 4, 1913? Does it mean that he would feel warranted in assuming a mandate to compel the Congress to do his bidding? Does it mean that he would feel justified in arrogating to himself the fixed powers of the legislative department of the Government? Does it mean that he would feel at liberty to nullify the statutes? Does it mean, as in the case of Mexico and the siege of Vera Cruz, that he would know no restraint in unsheathing the sword and at his leisure seeking the sanction of the Congress? Does it mean, as in the case of Germany, that in the event of the nation finding it necessary to resort to arms to preserve its existence, he would feel free to ask for a declaration of war upon a given bill of wrongs, then allege an altogether different one, and under the allegation overwhelm the country in debt and commit us to policies, alliances and covenants at variance with our experience, our traditions and our purposes?

Does it mean that he would think himself sustained in leaving the United States whenever he was inspired to do so, to impose himself and his views of government upon foreign nations? Does it mean that he would assert the right to say, even in the face of our direct vote to the contrary, that he held a mandate from the people of the United States to bind them and commit them to international enterprises of his making, without further reference or counsel? Does it mean that he would not expect to be challenged if he should instigate the acquisition of private property and the conduct of business by the Government?

What other meaning can be drawn from the record of the years since 1913? Thus stand the principal mile-stones of that record, for all practical purposes in sequence—the precedents which have reared themselves through this period of our life to bedevil our whole future.

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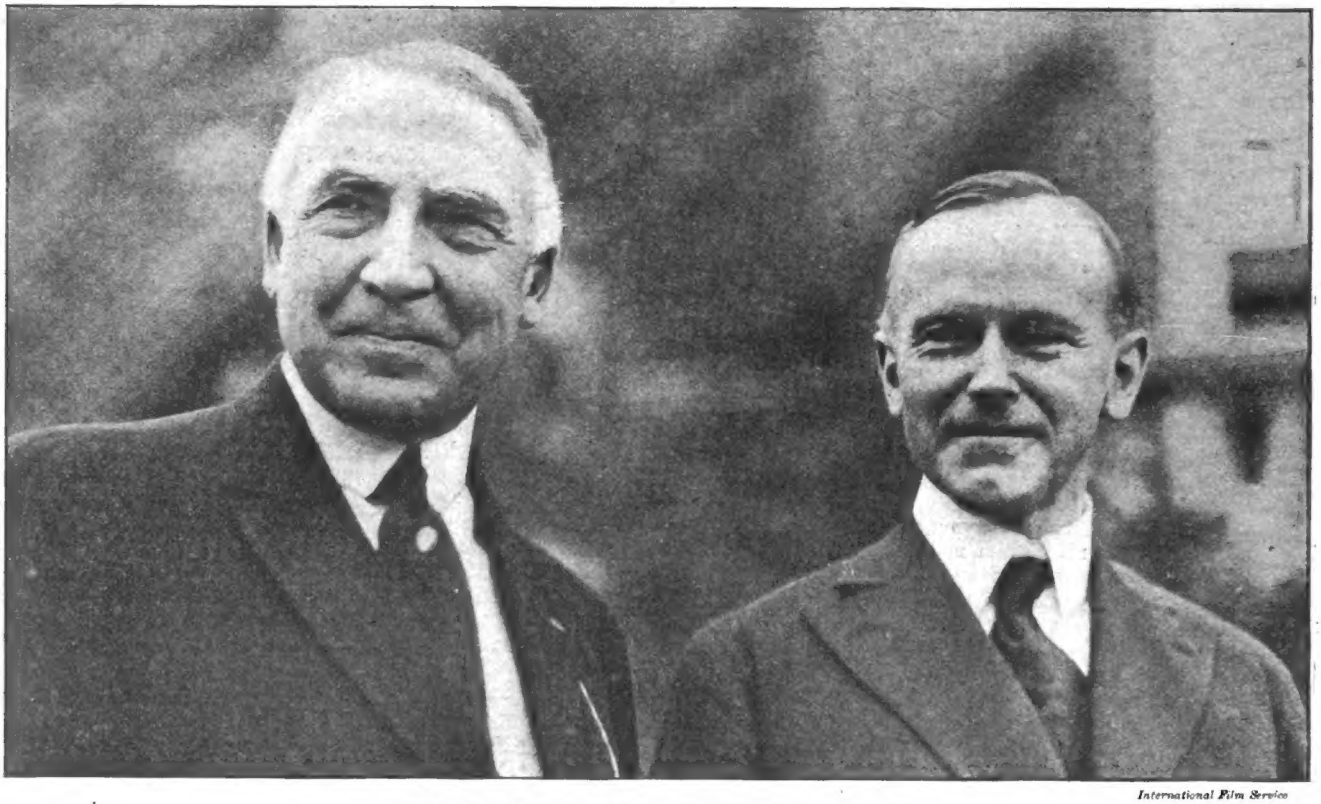

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THE REPUBLICAN STANDARD-BEARERS

Senator Warren G. Harding, who says: "No man is big enough to run this great republic. . . . . Our first committal is the restoration of representative popular government under the Constitution,"— and Governor Calvin Coolidge, who believes in being "just as reactionary as the multiplication table when necessary."

Does your mind willingly go along with that idea of government? You are one of the stockholders in this enterprise which we call the United States of America. It is your privilege to say whether you want it run after that fashion or not. Next month you vote on it, and as you vote you pay.

The Will of the Fathers

BUT that is not the way the Fathers planned that this government should be run. They resolved, first of all, to found a government of laws and not of men. They were afraid of kings. They were afraid of autocrats. They knew history. They knew the history of the struggle of their own forebears against the British Crown overseas. They knew the invariable tendency of the executive power to encroach and absorb authority. They had a surpassing knowledge of human nature, of the lure which power holds for men, of the lengths to which ambition will lead them.

To create an executive head with such limitations as would prevent his repeating history on the western side of the Atlantic became their dominant thought. It amounted practically to an obsession. They worked in constant fear of some man, sooner or later, arising and thwarting the liberties which they had snatched out of a hellish war for themselves and for us who were to come after them. They were so fearful of such a man that they came very near creating in the Congress a power which would have been quite as inimical to their purpose and our life as the executive they had in mind. They discovered this mistake as they went along, and with new earnestness addressed themselves to the single purpose of so dividing the powers of the national government "among various persons and bodies that none should absorb or overbear the others."

In the end, and with great wisdom, they founded a system composed of three separate and distinct but coordinate branches of government, with none responsible to or accountable to the others, and all responsible to and accountable to a common power—the will of the majority expressed through the ballot-box.

They planned a legislative department, the Congress, renewable every two years by popular vote, to enact laws, appropriate moneys, impose taxes, declare war, ratify treaties and override the executive veto upon occasion. They planned a judiciary branch, the Supreme Court, to interpret and pass upon the acts of Congress and the actions of executives in the light of the Constitution. They planned an executive department, the Presidency, to protect and defend the Constitution, to execute the laws of the Congress, to veto legislation, to advise the legislative department as to the state of the Union and make expedient recommendations and to negotiate treaties by and with the consent of the Senate.

Their design was, and the purpose of the Constitution is, that the judiciary department shall be a check upon both the legislative and executive branches; that the legislative branch shall be a check upon the executive, not only in its lawmaking function but in its capacity to override the executive veto by a two-thirds majority; and that the executive department shall be a check on the legislative branch by that power of veto.

Roughly speaking, that is the fundamental and controlling scheme of the Constitution of the United States. And that the Fathers did well in their planning is conceded and for more than a century has been conceded by statesmen and students the world over. It may be said to be a universal judgment that "it ranks above every other written constitution for the intrinsic excellence of its scheme, its adaptation to the circumstances of the people, the simplicity, brevity and precision of its language, its judicious mixture of definiteness in principle with elasticity in details."*

But what better judgment do we wish than our own experience for one hundred and thirty-one years? We survive in the family of nations because of its genius. How much longer, though, can we hope to occupy the position we have attained if we continue to hold the suspicion of the great charter which, during nearly eight years past, has been engendered in us? How much longer can we hope to go on if we, the stockholders, stand in silence and by that silence acquiesce in its circumvention and emasculation?

Are You A "Silent Witness"?

MR. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, the Democratic vice-presidential nominee, wishes that every American could have been "a silent witness" on July eighteenth to the meeting between President Wilson and Governor Cox. Why silent? Why this rôle of silence for Americans? Does your mind willingly go along with that? You say you were not silent in November, 1918, when the President asked you to vote him a free hand to deal with Europe at the Paris peace table and you denied it to him. And that the raising of your voice made no difference. True.

* P. 1292, Vol. V, Hist. and Gov. of U. S.

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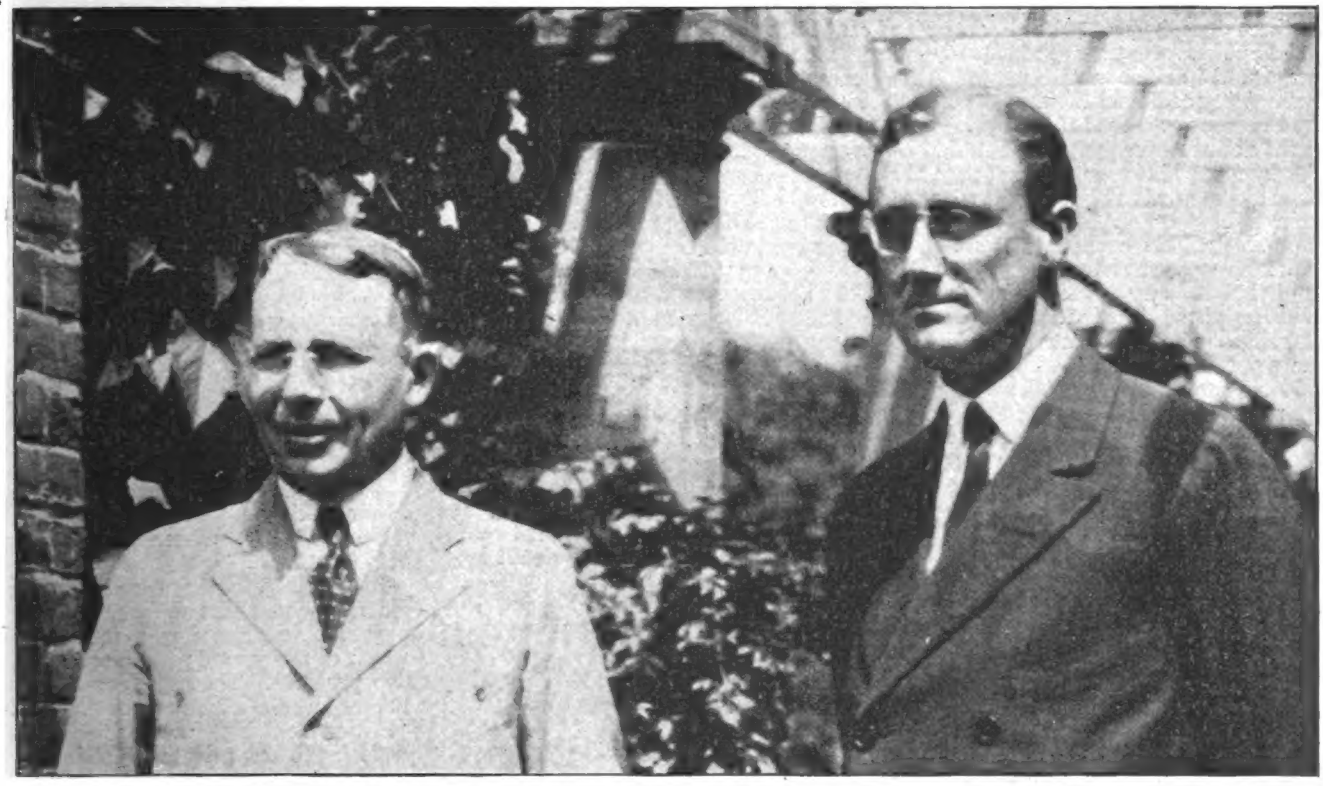

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THE DEMOCRATIC STANDARD-BEARERS.

Governor James M. Cox of Ohio, who says: "What he (Wilson) promised I shall, if elected, endeavor with all my strength to give," and Franklin D. Roosevelt, who wishes "that every American could have been a silent witness to the meeting between these two great men" (Cox and Wilson) whose "splendid accord" is an inspiration.

Wherefore we're standing up in meeting.

But you said nothing during the campaign of 1912, when you were told by the then Governor of New Jersey and a former president of Princeton University that:

"We are in the presence of a new organization of society. Our life has broken away from the past. . . . The old political formulas do not fit the present problems. . . . Our development has run so fast and so far along the lines sketched in the earlier day of constitutional definition, has so crossed and interlaced those lines, has piled upon them such novel structures. . . . that a new nation seems to have been created which the old formulas do not fit or afford a vital interpretation of. . . . Now this is nothing short of a new social age, a new era of human relationships, a new stage-setting for the drama of life. . . . America is not a place of which it can be said, as it used to be, that a man may choose his own calling and pursue it just as far as his abilities enable him to pursue it. . . . The laws of this country do not prevent the strong from crushing the weak. . . . We are in a new world, struggling under old laws. . . . Have you not noticed the growth of socialistic sentiment in the smaller towns? . . .

"The New Freedom"

"WHY are we in the presence, why are we at the threshold of a revolution?

"Don't you know that some man with eloquent tongue, without conscience, who did not care for the nation, could put this whole country into a flame? Don't you know that this country from one end to the other believes that something is wrong? What an opportunity it would be for some man without conscience to spring up and say: 'This is the way. Follow me!'—and lead to paths of destruction!" *

"The old order changeth—changeth under our very eyes, not quietly and equably, but swiftly and with the noise and heat and tumult of reconstruction. . . . I doubt if any age was ever more conscious of its task or more unanimously desirous of radical and extended changes in its economic and political practise. . . . We stand in the presence of a revolution—not a bloody revolution; America is not given to the spilling of blood—but a silent revolution." **

"Now, it came to me, as this interesting man talked, that the Constitution of the United States had been made under the dominion of the Newtonian Theory. You have only to read the papers of *The Federalist* to see that fact written on every page. They speak of the 'checks and balances' of the Constitution. . . . The makers . . . read Montesquieu with true scientific enthusiasm. They were scientists in their way—the best way of their age—those fathers of the nation. . . . Politics in their thought was a variety of mechanics. . . . *All that progressives ask or desire is permission . . . to interpret the Constitution according to the Darwinian principle.* . . .

". . . Finally, a generation or two from now, the scaffolding will be taken away, and there will be the family (the American people) in a great building whose noble architecture will at last be disclosed, where men can live as a single community, cooperative as in a perfected, coordinated beehive. . . ." †

Did your mind willingly go along with that? Is it your desire to have the Constitution interpreted by the Supreme Court as provided by the Constitution or interpreted by this or that temporary occupant of office according to his or her conception of the Darwinian principle? Again, does your mind willingly go along with the idea of transmuting this country into "a single community, cooperative as in a perfected, coordinated beehive?" Of course you know what would happen to you "in a perfected, coordinated beehive" if, by reason of old age, disease, or injury, you were incapable of performing your daily stint. You would be stung to death. Poor Russia is living under the beehive theory of government to-day. We are credibly informed that when they do not shoot the drones there they starve them to death.

An I. W. W. Text-Book

BUT if your mind did not willingly go along with the author of "The New Freedom" many a one's did. And all over the land, particularly during and since the war period, they have come into collision with the law, and successfully pleaded in defense that the source of their disturbing utterances was "The New Freedom." It is of record in a Seattle court that the book was offered by an I. W. W. publication as a premium to new subscribers.

Even after the adoption of the Constitution the Fathers were not quite certain that they had done all that it was possible to do to keep the Executive away from the Congress. Let him invade the Congress, as

* From pp. 1 to 28, "The New Freedom," by Woodrow Wilson.

** Pp. 29 to 30, "The New Freedom."

† Pp. 45 to 52, "The New Freedom."

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has been done, invested with the authority and the powers of patronage which they had assigned him, and he would be dictating the laws. They could not build a wall around the President or around the Congress, and so they compromised with their apprehension by fixing his abode at what they, for those days, considered a difficult distance from the Capitol. That is why the White House stands where it does to-day, one mile up Pennsylvania Avenue from Capitol Hill, an eloquent and lasting reminder of the demarkation between the executive and the legislative branches of the government.

Washington and John Adams followed the practise of delivering their presidential messages to Congress in person, but even in those unsettled and formative days, when it was problematical whether the ship would float or sink, the Congress and public opinion resented it. Jefferson dared only to submit his messages in writing, and no President since that time, not even such forceful men as Jackson and Lincoln and Roosevelt, thought of reviving their custom. It remained for Woodrow Wilson to ignore the distance between the White House and Capitol Hill.

Wilson's Abuse of Power

DID you realize what it meant? Scarcely two months had elapsed fr m the delivery of Wilson's first personal message of April 7, 1913, when he was belaboring the Congress through the public press to do what he had told them to do with the tariff. It is the people's prerogative, our right and ours alone, to demand things of the Congress, or to berate it, or to scold it, or to damn it, if necessary. We are the stockholders in the corporation of this government and the Congress is our board of directors, not the President's. And we get there exactly what we put there. If we elect boneheads, we get bonehead results, and it is not within the presidential province to scold us about it. If we elect a bonehead or wilful man to be our chief executive, that, too, is our business and of course our misfortune, but it is not within the province of the Congress to scold us about it.

Does your mind willingly go along with the idea that a criminal law should be operable against you and not against your next-door neighbor? If it does not, we fail to recall that you protested very audibly when on June 23, 1913, the President and our board of directors nullified the Sherman Anti-Trust law in so far as its provisions applied to criminal acts committed by labor unions and farmers' organizations. Did you?

For twenty-five years lobbies representing those two groups had been working to that end. The last official act of President Taft on March 4, 1913, was to veto the Sundry Civil bill of that year because it carried an amendment prohibiting the use of any money for the prosecution of criminal suits or actions against labor unions and farmers' associations.

Thus ran the Taft veto:

"*This provision is class legislation of the most vicious sort.* If it were enacted as substantive law and not merely as a qualification upon the use of moneys appropriated for the enforcement of the law, no one, I take it, would doubt its unconstitutionality. . . . Any organization formed with a beneficent purpose, as described in the proviso, might later engage in a conspiracy to destroy by force, violence, or unfair means any employer or employees who failed to conform with its requirements. . . . It would be exempt from prosecution no matter how wicked, how cruel, how deliberate the acts of which it was guilty. . . . It is because I am unwilling to be a party to writing such a provision into the laws of this republic that I am unable to give my consent to a bill which contains this provision."

That year's session of Congress opened on April sixth or seventh. Anyway, on April twelfth an order went from the White House to Capitol Hill to repass the Sundry Civil bill without the crossing of a "t" or the dotting of an "i." On April thirteenth this official announcement issued from the White House:

"*President Wilson does not believe that the Anti-Trust Act should be enforced against labor unions or cooperative associations of farmers.*"

Photo by International

President Wilson on his last tour of the country, when he tried to justify to the people his conduct in Paris.

Did your mind willingly go along with that? On June twenty-third the Sundry Civil bill became law. It was the first direct result of the invasion of Congress by the Executive.

It is not possible to follow history step by step up and down Pennsylvania Avenue through the entire interim. But did your mind willingly go along in approval of the circumstances surrounding the enactment, by force, of the Adamson Eight-Hour bill in September, 1916? As we recall it, you stood by in silence among practically a majority of the stockholders when the heads of the railway brotherhoods descended upon the Congress and, under the menace of a strike which, as the President himself said, would imperil the very life of the nation, compelled our elected representatives to do their bidding within a given time limit.

Do you believe in arbitration as a principle of reason and justice?

Provision was made in the Adamson bill, as originally drafted, for the arbitration of all labor controversies before there could be a justifiable strike or walkout. The brotherhood leaders, who, for more than a year, had resisted arbitration with the railroads, commanded the Congress to strike it out under penalty of political crucifixion at the hands of organized labor. The arbitration clause went out, and upon signing the bill on September third the President presented his pen to Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, as a souvenir.

It is not a question of whether the Adamson law is good or bad, constitutional or unconstitutional. The question is whether your mind goes along willingly with the enactment of law by force or by the processes of reason and deliberation. For the sake of argument say it is a good law. Then is it not logical to assume that an obnoxious law may be and can be successfully bludgeoned into our statute books? There is no better illustration, in our opinion, of what the Fathers meant in subscribing to a government of laws and not of men.

Incidentally, the Adamson law, where it did not shorten the daily period of employment to eight hours, increased the wages of many road-service men twenty-five per cent. That was something the Fathers overlooked; or rather they did not consider the fixing of a man's or of a citizen's wage in private employment as within the province of government. As they understood life, a man was entitled to all that his abilities could earn, and it was none of their business and none of the Republic's.

A Supine Nation

BEFORE leaving the subject of the railroads, "may we not" ask if your mind in the closing days of 1917 and your pocketbook willingly went along with the government's taking over and operating the transportation systems of the nation?

We happened to be on a Pennsylvania train bound to an army school in the southwest on the eve of the institution of government control of the railroads. But in the smoke-room of our Pullman where the passengers foregathered in numbers after meals the topic of conversation was not of this most momentous economic adventure in American history, nor of the alleged occasion of it. The passengers to a man were typically representative of the keen, hard-thinking, independent American business class. They talked of cattle, of hogs, of mines, of grain, of oil, of everything else but the meaning of the government's assumption of control of the railroads and the probable results. It was astounding. We could reach only the conclusion, that their minds willingly were going along with events or that the people no longer cared what happened.

Through a whole day only one man, who happened to sit next to us for a little while exhibited any interest in the subject.

"What do you think of this taking over the railroads?" he asked.

Being in the army and rightfully and properly muzzled, we answered:

"You should read 'The New Freedom,' by President Wilson, and his 'Congressional Government' and his 'Constitutional Government.'"

We often wonder if he followed that suggestion, and what he thought when he came upon opinions such as have been quoted and like these set down when nobody even dreamed that the author would some day be a President of the United States:

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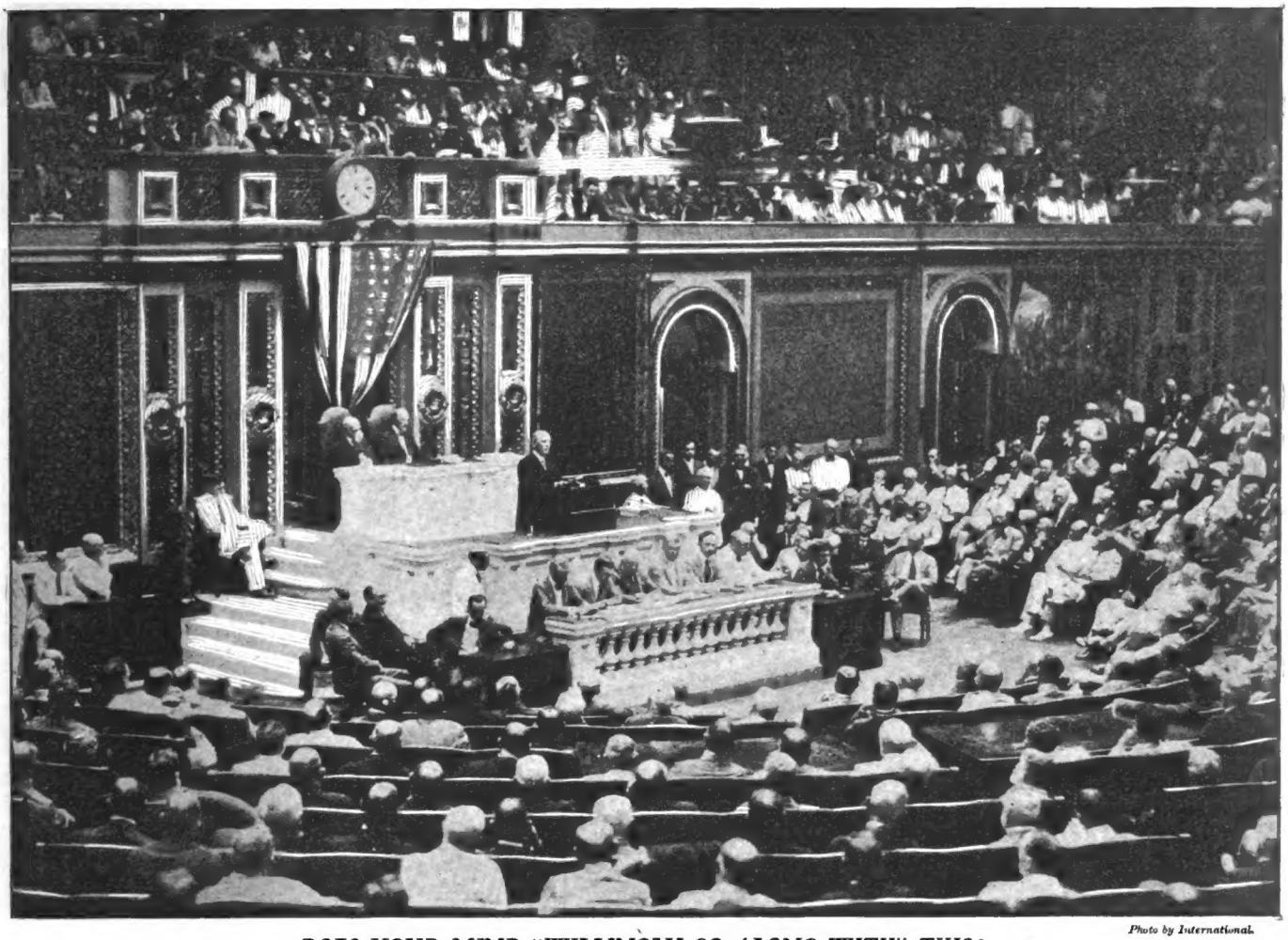

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DOES YOUR MIND "WILLINGLY GO ALONG WITH" THIS?

"The President is at liberty, both in law and in conscience, to be as big a man as he can . . . . Let the President once win the admiration and confidence of the country and no other force can withstand him, no combination of forces will easily overpower him."

"The Presidency is too silent and inactive, too little of a premiership, and too much like a superintendency. . . . It is not repugnant to democratic ideas to make Congress the fountainhead of authority, *even if it is or should be a perversion of the framers of the Constitution.* . . . ."*

"The President is at liberty, both in law and in conscience, to be as big a man as he can. . . . the *personal force* of the President is *perfectly constitutional* to any extent to which he chooses to exercise it. . . . He is the one person who can form opinion by his own direct influence and act upon the whole country at once, and if he is a great person and great as an orator, then he has the ear of the nation, and a great person may use this advantage greatly. . . . *Let the President once win the admiration and confidence of the country and no other force can withstand him, no combination of forces will easily overpower him.*"**

You've Paid

WHETHER our friend of the train read those books and entered upon an understanding of the forces and influences which produced the events of 1917 and 1918 and their sequence we can not report. One thing, however, is certain: he is paying through the nose. His Liberty bonds are on the bargain-counter and his five, five and a half and six per cent. nest-egg is shrinking. Liberties and nest-eggs can't compete with the short-term, higher-rated securities of Government—and we pay the Government's interest bill—which are being floated to repair the damage that has been done. Nor can they compete with the eight per cent. equipment trusts which the railroads themselves are putting out to restore rolling-stock and road-beds for the accommodation of commerce.

Still there are more items than just those which must be taken into account, In order to pay eight per cent. interest on their borrowings and increases in wages, ranging from forty-eight to eighty-one per cent. since 1915, exclusive of the Adamson law increases, the railroads must increase freight rates. Increased freight rates mean, of course, increased costs to the ultimate consumer. It is the old, old circle.

So much for the railroads. But what about the telephone, telegraph and cable systems? Did your mind willingly go along with the Government's seizure and operation of them through the Post-Office Department? It was not a war necessity. It was a case of another threatened strike, and the radical advocates of government ownership did the rest.

How much are you paying for that adventure? How much are you going to have to pay? It is not improbable that you are as much in ignorance of that cost as you are of the name and qualifications of your representative in the Congress.

Turning again to the political side, we find ourselves confronted by Governor Cox's report of the White House meeting of July eighteenth.

"We [that is, Governor Cox and President Wilson] are agreed as to the meaning and sufficiency of the Democratic platform and the duty of the party in the face of threatened bad faith to the world in the name of America. . . . What he (the President) promised I shall, if elected, endeavor with all my strength to give."

Which is a declaration that Mr. Cox proposes to do exactly as the President he aspires to succeed has done. It is an acceptance of the executive rôle according to President Wilson's conception of it.

Bullying the Senate

OPEN "Constitutional Government," by Woodrow Wilson, and see if your mind goes along as willingly as Mr. Cox's with this:

"Our President must always, henceforth, be one of the great powers of the world, whether he act greatly or not . . ." Not the United States, not her people, but the President must be one of the great powers. (That was written some time in 1900 and with McKinley's career and the Spanish-American War in mind.)

"We can never hide our President again as a mere domestic officer. . . . He must stand always at the front of our affairs, and the office will be as big and as influential as the man who occupies it. . . . *His*

* From "Congressional Government," by Woodrow Wilson.

** From "Constitutional Government," by Woodrow Wilson.

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office is anything he has the sagacity and force to make it."

Now open "Congressional Government" (1907 edition), by Woodrow Wilson, and in the light of the Paris "peace" conference and the events of 1918 and 1919 read this:

"The President really has no voice at all in the conclusions of the Senate with reference to his diplomatic transactions, or with reference to any of the matters upon which he consults it. . . . *His only power of compelling compliance on the part of the Senate lies in his initiative in negotiation which affords him a chance to get the country into such scrapes, so pledged in the view of the world to certain courses of action, that the Senate hesitates to bring about the appearance of dishonor which would follow its refusal to ratify the rash promises or to support the indiscreet threats of the Department of State.*"

Does your mind willingly go along with that?

"Did the President deliberately resort to this method when, in December, 1918, he went to Europe to form a League of Nations?" asks David Jayne Hill in his "American World Policies," only to add:

"If he had intended to pledge the country, in the view of the world, to certain courses of action which the Senate would hesitate either to ratify or to oppose, he could not have pursued a course better adapted to produce this effect than the one he adopted."

What do you think? May we not expect Mr. Cox, under his pledge to the President, to employ exactly the same method and depend upon the chance of a supine Senate to save our "honor?"

They Talk of "Honor"

THERE has been a lot of loose talk during the past year about America's good faith and honor. Some of it is pure emotion. Some of it is just plain political bunk. But for the most part it finds its inspiration in Europe, and the Americans who are moved by this imported apprehension to exhort the rest of us do not know it for an imported article.

We went to war in April, 1917, because Germany by the violation of our sacred rights had long left us no alternative. She had Britain and France and Italy with their backs against the wall and it was to be our turn next. It was not a matter of making the world safe for democracy. It was a case of self-preservation. Making the world safe for democracy was an after-thought, a war emotion.

Early in October, 1918, it had become apparent that the Huns were getting ready to talk turkey. Peace or parleys which might lead to it were in sight. On October twenty-fifth, in view of this probability, and within ten days of the congressional elections, the President, asserting that the period was the most critical the country had ever faced or was likely to face in our time, put this proposition to the people of the United States:

"If you have approved of my leadership and wish me to continue to be your unembarrassed spokesman in affairs at home and abroad, I earnestly beg that you will express yourselves unmistakably to that effect by returning a Democratic majority to both the Senate and the House of Representatives. . . .

"*The people of the Allied countries with whom we are associated against Germany are quite familiar with the significance of elections.* They would find it very difficult to believe that the voters of the United States had chosen to support their President by electing to the Congress a majority controlled by those who are not, in fact, in sympathy with the attitude and actions of the Administration."

The country, knowing all of the facts and with its eyes wide open, elected a Republican majority. That election was not a star-chamber proceeding any more than next month's is to be. It was not held *in camera*, but with the whole world for an audience. And its verdict was intended to be of significance not only to the peoples of the allied countries but to their politicians. It was a service of notice that our Constitution remained unchanged, and that while our chief executive was empowered to negotiate a peace, he must be controlled by the advice and consent of the Senate.

Who Fooled Europe?

EUROPE sat down at the peace table with this knowledge determining every card she played. There wasn't a member of that conference who did not understand that the President of the United States, no matter what he pledged, was not the sole treaty-making power. They know the American Constitution backward and forward over there. It has kept more than one of them awake o' nights. The provision fixing the making of treaties in the chief executive "by and with the advice and consent of the Senate" is one of the primary grade lessons in their schools of statecraft. For Lloyd George or Clémenceau or anybody else in Europe to claim or suggest now that they were in ignorance of this fact during their negotiations with the President is to bring their good faith into question and not ours. If they were deceived, which is ridiculous, they deceived themselves, and with what motives can only be imagined. Do they suggest that President Wilson was under a misapprehension as to where all our treaty powers lie? Certainly they could not sustain that, for the President himself says in his "Congressional Government:"

"The greatest consultative privilege of the Senate—the greatest in dignity, at least, if not in effect upon the interests of the country—is *its right to a ruling voice* in the ratification of treaties with foreign powers. . . ."

But if your mind more willingly goes along with the case which the European propagandists are seeking to create against the United States then there is but one thing to do—vote for the gentleman who has pledged himself, if elected, to redeem every one of the unauthorized pledges made in our name; admit that we have been attempting to welsh and that it is up to the Senate to get us out of the scrape. That is your privilege.

Still, on the other hand, your mind may more willingly go along with the Republican nominee, Senator Warren G. Harding, of Ohio, who opposes that idea. He does not contend that the office of the President of the United States "is anything he has the sagacity and force to make it," nor that "the President *must* always be one of the great powers of the world," nor that the way to compel the Senate to comply with his will is "to get the country into such scrapes, so pledged in the view of the world to certain courses of action" that the Senate would hesitate "to bring about the appearance of dishonor which would follow its refusal to ratify the [his] rash promises."

Rather he says:

"No man is big enough to run this great republic." Again: "Our first committal is the restoration of representative popular government under the Constitution." Again: "We believe in a Cabinet of the highest capacity . . . in whose councils the Vice-President, second official of the republic, shall be asked to participate."

There is particular promise in that last, for Governor Calvin Coolidge, of Massachusetts, is Senator Harding's ticket-mate, and, if elected, he will be one of the Cabinet. We know Coolidge. We have said of him that he is of the statesman stuff which has written the finest pages in our American history. He has an abiding faith in men and in the quality of their spiritual nature. He believes fervently in a government of laws, drawing its authority from the will of a popular majority and not from the clamor of an organized minority or the inspiration of any individual. He believes in being just as reactionary as the multiplication table when necessary. More, he believes that "nobody has any right to strike against the public safety anywhere, any time."

And there is particular promise, too, in what Senator Harding says of our lessening the load of debt which is upon our necks. He does not insult our intelligence with the fallacious, the dishonest political formula of "Elect me and I shall see that laws are passed which will bring us into Utopia."

Not that; but this:

"By your thrift and economy, by the government's thrift and economy, by increased production only, *not by legislation*, can we hope to emerge from the morass of debt and put behind us four-billion-dollar budgets."

There is appeal to the real spirit of America in his view of what our foreign relations should be:

"It is better to be the free and disinterested agent of international justice . . . than be shackled by a written contract which surrenders our freedom of action."

Take Your Choice

WE HAVE come to a fork in the road of our destiny. And next month at the polls we must settle whether we shall keep on to the left or turn to the right.

The left-hand road means a continuation of personal government, rule by executive mandate and not by statute, a transference of the powers of the Congress to the executive department, a presidency in which personal force is perfectly constitutional, the interpretation of our Constitution—yours and ours—by other principles than those of settled law and accepted reason, and at the end, as we see it, "a perfected, coordinated beehive," or worse.

The right-hand road is a highway which has brought us far—a highway ruled not by men, but by law and the orders of reason and experience. One has only to look over his or her shoulder to see every one of its milestones rising clear—landmarks in a past of achievement such as, in all history, no nation of freemen can boast.

Which road is it to be, folks?

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The Expert Detective

By Melville Davisson Post

THE State had completed its case.

The conviction of the prisoners seemed beyond question.

Incident by incident, the expert detective, Barkman, had coupled up the circumstantial evidence until it seemed to link the prisoners inevitably to the crime. He was a big man, with eyes blue like a piece of crockery, a wide face and a cruel, irregular jaw. One felt that no sentiment restrained him; that he would carry out any undertaking to its desperate end.

He sat now in the witness-chair. He was the last witness for the State, and, now that the case was complete, he had been turned over for cross-examination.

It was afternoon. A sheet of sunlight entering through open windows lay on the court-room. It was a court-room of a little city in the South; a city but newly awakened to industrial activities, and the conduct of its administration of justice still adhered to older and more deliberate forms.

The court-room was crowded with people down to the very railing that separated the attorneys' tables from the crowd.

The judge, a tall man, with a long, mild, unhealthy face, sat on the bench. To the right of him and a step below was the clerk. The jury were in chairs along the wall to the left of the bench. And between the bench and jurors sat the witness.

The prosecuting attorney was before his table, a little to the right of the first step to the bench. There were law books on his table, and two polka-dot handkerchiefs lying loosely on some papers. The man was no longer concerned with these articles. He sat back from the table, his fingers linked together, his face lifted as in some reflection.

Farther to the right, in two chairs against the railing, were the prisoners. One, a big old man with a splotched, dissipated face and his hair cropped close to his skull. Folds of fat lay along the base of his neck, partly concealed by a white silk handkerchief held in place under his chin by a long old-fashioned garnet pin. His companion was a little, thin, fox-faced man who moved nervously in his chair.

The most striking figure in the court-room was the attorney for the prisoners.

He sat between them, a chair's width in advance, before his table. There was nothing whatever on this table except an ink-pot, two pens and a big blotting-sheet. There was also a thick pad of foolscap paper provided for the convenience of the attorney in taking any note of the testimony, but there was no word written on it.

The lawyer was a huge bulk of a man. He sat relaxed in his chair. His thick, black hair was brushed smoothly. It was of an oily, glossy blackness. His big, thick features were putty-colored, as though the man's skin had no vitality.

The futility of human ingenuity in crime—this is the theme of the intense drama packed in these few words. The same unique quality of suspense and surprise as this story has marks Mr. Post's next, in an early number.

His eyes were very nearly closed; his mouth sagged open, the thick lips holding a cigar that was not lighted.

Every detail of his dress was immaculate and arranged with extreme care.

The man was perhaps sixty, but in the big relaxed body and heavy face, age was indefinite. He now took the cigar out of his mouth and laid it down on the table. He moved like one coming out of a dream.

He had not immediately taken charge of the witness when the prosecutor had released him for examination. But now, finally, at the judge's words, "Proceed, colonel," he at last looked up.

"You are an expert detective, Mr. Barkman."

The voice had a strange dwindling whine as though it came from some cavernous deep in the man's immense body.

The witness looked about with a vague smile. "Well, Colonel," he said, "I have had some experience."

"You have had a great deal of experience. You were Chief of Police, then you set up a detective agency. You have had a lot of experience in criminal investigation. And you have usually been right."

This was generous treatment when the reverse was indicated.

The detective was not conspicuous for the confidence of the community in a profession too often subject to cloud. His employment in the bank affairs had followed from his intimate association with Halloway, an association, as all knew, resulting from the handling of a questionable matter in the banker's private life.

The bank did not require a retained detective.

Was this man's sinecure gratitude in the banker, or a sort of blackmail? Here was material with which a reflection on the witness could have been assembled. But the attorney chose rather to admit the man's superior mental acumen in criminal affairs.

THE witness moved in his chair. "Well, Colonel," he said, "I try to be right."

"And you have nearly always been right," continued the attorney. "In the Deal case you maintained that the decedent had not been killed by a bullet fired from a cellar grating at a hundred yards along the street east of the man's window, and it was afterward shown that the trajectory of a bullet fired from that point would have crashed into an electric light midway of the distance. And in the Littlewood case, you said the evidences of a struggle were manufactured, because the slant of wood fibers in the broken window-sash showed that the pressure had been exerted from within the room and not from without."

The voice ascended into a lighter drawl with a facetious note in it.

"You have had a lot of experience, and you have had a lot of work, but you have not got rich at it. You would like to be rich, wouldn't you?"

The witness laughed. "I suppose everybody would like to be rich, colonel."

The attorney smiled, a big, loose, vacuous sort of smile. "Old Bill," he said, "here behind me, and Lying Louie would like to be rich, but they are more likely to be hanged." He laughed again. "You are not afraid of being hanged, Mr. Barkman?"

Everybody laughed. The eccentricities of this attorney were one of the attractions of the court-room. They were good-naturedly overlooked by the officers of the court, who had been associated with the man for a lifetime in an old-fashoined civilization, deliberate and considerative.

THE attorney made a gesture as of one putting by a pleasantry of the moment.

"This was a very ingeniously constructed crime?'

The witness was now in an excellent humor. "I'd say it was, Colonel," he replied. "It was slick enough to fool me."

"Ah!" The attorney continued. "I had forgotten that. It was your theory in the beginning that the president of the Trader's Bank, Mr. Halloway, had accomplished the robbery himself, and, afterward, dropped dead in his own house. He lay on the floor, when the body was discovered, by the side of the library table. It was thought that in falling his head had struck the heavy carved foot of the table, causing the injury to the skull that resulted in death. The physicians first called in were inclined to agree with that theory. The immense strain of a criminal adventure might have caused the accident after the man had returned to his house. Emotional cataclysms have been known to bring on attacks of acute indigestion or the rupture of a defective heart."

"Sure, Colonel," the witness assented, "that's what the thing looked like; and I was fooled about it; I admit it. There was no evidence of a struggle in the room. It was only after Doctor North said the man had been killed by a blow, probably with the poker, that I got onto the right track."

The attorney made a drawling assent. "Yes," he said, "that was a bad find."

His voice went again into a strange laugh. "It was mighty near a hangin' find for Old Bill and Lyin' Louie! You got on better then, Mr. Barkman. You found two polka-dot handkerchiefs that had been stuffed down into a vase in the library, and then you found Old Bill and Lyin' Louie. Now you are goin' to hang 'em, I reckon."

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There was a suppressed giggle in the court-room. It was not shared by the prisoners.

The big, old man of the close-cropped skull plucked the attorney by the sleeve and spoke in an audible whisper. "Looka here, Colonel," he said, "I thought you was defendin' us."

The attorney replied, a higher note in his deep drawl. "Yes," he said, "that's what I am doing. But you've got no sense, Bill! You never had any sense. If you had had any sense you would not have been in the pen-i-ten-tia-ry house. There was no reason for your going to the pen-i-ten-tia-ry. Old Lansky tried to make a bank-cracker out of you—I was in the cell with him on the night he was hanged—he said you had no sense. He said you would never make anything but a fence, and a damned poor fence—that's what he said, Bill."

HE INTERRUPTED the long narrative by getting ponderously on his feet. He reached out and took the two handkerchiefs from the table of the prosecuting attorney and laid them down on his own.

Then he addressed the witness. "Now, Mr. Barkman," he said, "I'd like you to tell us precisely what you think happened on the night of the twenty-seventh. I want you to reconstruct this crime for us. I want you to show us just how Old Bill and Lyin' Louie went about this thing."

The witness moved as though rearranging himself in his chair. He shifted his shoulder a little to one side and he looked around toward the jury.

"Well, Colonel," he said, "I think I can tell you just exactly what happened."

He was not expecting to be interrupted. But he was interrupted by a sort of explosive assent.

The big attorney was looking at him, resting his huge body on both hands, on the table. The witness was for a moment disconcerted, then he went on.

"It was like this," he said, "as I figure it out. Everybody knows that Old Bill was a bank-cracker."

Again, there was a sort of booming interruption.

"He was never a good bank-cracker," the lawyer exploded; "he was a poor bank-cracker. He was such a damn poor bank-cracker that he got into the pen-i-ten-tia-ry house!"

The witness laughed. "Anyway, colonel," he said, "when Louie drifted in here, the two of them fixed up this game and they carried it out slick."

Again the lawyer introduced an interruption.

"Now, that is just what I am anxious to know, Mr. Barkman. I am anxious to know precisely what they did and how they did it. I want to know, in detail, everything that happened that night."

"Well," replied the witness, "this is the way I figure it out, Colonel, and I think it's straight dope: These men fixed up their plan and Louie hung around until he found that the bank president was alone in his house. That was the night his family went to the Springs. It was in the newspapers. Everybody knew it. Then about midnight they went up to Mr. Halloway's house."

"And how did they get into the house?" inquired the lawyer.

"That was no trouble," said the witness. "They rang the bell. They wanted Mr. Halloway to come down just as he did come down, with his dressing-gown on, like he was found dead in the library."

The attorney had changed his posture. He was idly fingering the two polka-dot handkerchiefs.

The witness went on:

"When Mr. Halloway opened the door, one of these crooks jammed a pistol against him. They shut the door and marched him into the library. And there they told him what they were going to do. They held him up, right there in the library, and forced him to give them the combination to the bank safe."

"And how were they to know that the combination which the banker gave them was the correct one? Would not his impulse be—would not any one's impulse be—to give an incorrect combination of figures?"

The witness laughed. "Old Bill would know the trick," he said. "They would ask the banker to give the combination. They would write it down as he gave it; then they would wait a little while and ask him again, and if he had made it up, he would not be able to remember. That's an old trick. It was done in the North Hampton bank robbery, where they burned the cashier's feet for lying."

The big attorney swung around toward his clients. "Did you ever hear of that, Bill?"

"No," said the prisoner, "I never did."

Again the attorney laughed that vague, futile laugh. "I believe you, Bill," he said, "although nobody else does—I'm paid to believe you."

He turned back to the witness "What happened then?"

The big prisoner with the folded white handkerchief for a cravat was mumbling incoherently.

The attorney paid no attention.

He looked at the witness. "Go on, Mr. Barkman," he said. "What did they do next?"

"WELL," said the witness, "when they had got the correct combination written down, they put a gun against Mr. Halloway and made him go over to the telephone. They made him call up the watchman at the bank and tell him just what he has sworn here Mr. Halloway told him that night: that his child was sick and the doctor wanted him to come right out home. Mr. Halloway had to say just what they told him to say, because there they stood with a gun against him. They could hear every word he said. The bank watchman asked him what he could do about leaving the bank, and they made Mr. Halloway say to him over the telephone, to go ahead out to his house at once and that he himself would drive over in his car and stay in the bank until the watchman got back; then they hung up the receiver."

The lawyer put a query: "How do you suppose they were standing while Mr. Halloway was calling the bank?"

The witness got up. "Mr. Halloway was of course facing the telephone and the man with the gun was standing behind him with the muzzle jammed against his back. That would be the way they would be standing."

He was about to sit down, but the lawyer interrupted him: "Just a minute."

He turned to the prisoner sitting on his left.

"Louie," he said, "I want you to go over to Mr. Barkman and show us just how you were holding that pistol against the banker's back while he was talking over the telephone. We'll say Mr. Barkman's the banker."

Everybody in the court-room was astonished at this slip of the attorney.

It would appear that he, like every one else, was convinced of the guilt of the prisoners, and that this conviction had thus unconsciously appeared in his words.

The man seemed not to realize what he had said. But the prisoner saw it at once.

"Colonel," he objected, "how can I show him how it was done when I didn't do it?" The attorney made an exasperated gesture. "Oh, Louie," he said, "you are such a liar that nobody believes anything you say. Do what I tell you."

Then he stooped over the prisoner. "Just a moment, Judge," he explained; "I have got to encourage my client."

He whispered something in the man's ear.

THE prisoner rose and went over to the witness; he took him by the shoulders and turned him around toward the judge, so that his back was to the jury. He moved him until he got him in precisely the position which he wished and then he thrust his long forefinger in the man's back, with the other fingers doubled up.

"How's that, Colonel?" he said.

"Well," said the attorney, "what do you think about it, Louie? Do you think it's O. K.?

"Sure," said the prisoner.

Then he came back and sat down in the chair.

The whole court-room was amused and astonished. It was as good as a theatre.

The attorney returned to his examination of the witness.

"Proceed, Mr. Barkman," he said. "What did they do next? Did they make Mr. Halloway go over to the bank? His car was seen there and he was, himself, seen going in, by some persons passing at the end of the street. He was alone. How did they make him go over there alone, accomplish the robbery, and come back to his house?"

Again the witness smiled shrewdly. "They didn't make him do it," he said. "Old Bill there, he's about the size of Mr. Halloway."

He turned about to the jurors.

"Mr. Halloway was a man, as you all know, about as big as I am. Old Bill put on the banker's hat and his long light overcoat. The runabout stood under the porte-cochère outside. He went out, got in this car and drove it over to the bank. He had the banker's key to the door and he had the combination to the safe, so he went in, opened the safe, picked out the money and brought it back with him."

The attorney suddenly interrupted. "Now, there," he said, "right there! Why did they take only big bills and not smaller currency? There were twenty thousand dollars taken in big bills—five-hundred and one-thousand-dollar bills. Why did they take that and not the smaller currency?"

"I can explain that," said the witness. "You see they had to hide this money after they got it—they had to look out

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Then he thrust his long forefinger in the man's back. . . .

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for that; they might have to move pretty quickly. They could not trust anybody to keep it for them and they were afraid to conceal it, so they would have to carry it around with them. That's the reason they took big bills."

"Ah," said the attorney, "I understand it now. It puzzled me a lot. I could not see what they meant by taking big bills and leaving the rest of the money; but it's clear now."

He swung suddenly around to the prisoners. "Louie," he said, "you never told me that."

The creature grinned, his face broken into a queer extended smile.

But the big prisoner to the right showed evidence of no such conciliatory mood.

He got up. "Judge," he said, "we're bein' double-crossed. I paid the Colonel, here, a hundred dollars in honest money to defend us, and just look what he's doin' to us."

Everybody laughed.

The lawyer turned about and spoke to the man as he might have spoken to an impertinent child. "Sit down, Bill," he said. "Louie knows that I am making a proper defense, don't you, Louie?"

The little fox-faced man continued to grin. But he said nothing.

"Now, Bill," the lawyer went on gently as to a child, "Louie's got some sense; not much. He learned how to open registered envelopes, when he started in to be a mail clerk, by watching the post-office inspectors rolling a pen-handle under the flap; and he learned to feel for money in the envelope before he opened it. The post-office inspectors taught him that. Louie had sense enough to learn it. He learned it well. He can tell the feel of a bill through the thickest envelope that was ever mailed. But you are a fool, Bill; Lansky told me that. Nobody but a fool, after he robbed the Norristown bank, would have hidden the money in the loft of an abandoned schoolhouse, with a trail of cinders leading from the window up to the trap in the ceiling. Anybody but a fool would have wiped his feet off before he climbed in the window."

The whole court-room was convulsed with laughter; even the judge smiled.

Nothing could have been more of the essence of comedy than these passages between the attorney and his client.

THE big lawyer turned again to the witness. "Now, Mr. Barkman," he said, "what did they do when Bill got back with the money?"

"They finished the job," replied the witness.

"Well," said the attorney, "what did they do?"

"It is clear what they did," replied the detective; "they killed Mr. Halloway with the fire poker, then they hid the two handkerchiefs they had over their faces when they came in, and then they got out of town."

The witness sat back in his chair as though he had finished with his testimony.

The big attorney stood up. The whole aspect of the man, as by the snap of a switch, had undergone a transformation. The huge bulk of him was vital. His heavy slack face was firm.

"Mr. Barkman," he said, "why did the men who killed Hiram Halloway wear no masks on their faces?"

"They did wear masks on their faces—they're on the table before you."

The lawyer did not look down at the articles before him. His voice was now hard and accurate like the point of a steel tool.

"Take it as a hypothetical question then. Suppose they wore no masks. What would that fact indicate?"

The attorney for the State rose.

"I object," he said. "There must be evidence in the case tending to support the assumed facts in a hypothetical question."

"The evidence shall be presently indicated," replied the lawyer.

The judge passed on the objection at once.

"The Colonel promises to point out the evidence later. He may go on; the witness has been introduced as an expert."

THE lawyer again faced the man in the chair. He repeated his question.

The witness seemed doubtful. "I don't know," he said.

"You don't know. Reflect, Mr. Barkman. Would it not mean that the person or persons who accomplished this criminal act felt that they were so well known to Hiram Halloway that no ordinary disguise could conceal their identity?"

The witness did not immediately reply, and the lawyer went on:

"And is not this the reason why Hiram Halloway was killed?"

"Why he was killed!" repeated the man in the chair.

"Yes, precisely the reason. One must credit even a common thief with some intelligence. No one uselessly adds the crime of murder to a lesser crime. Masked assassins wholly unknown to the decedent would have gagged and bound him. It would have answered their purpose as well. But not the purpose of a known, unmasked assassin. Safety for him lay only in the banker's death."

The attorney added:

"That death was so unavoidably necessary—to cover the identity of the assassin—that the evidences of an accidental death were arranged with elaborate care. Is it not true?"

The witness had been twisting his feet about; his face uncertain. Now it took on a dogged look. "It's true that the thing was a slick job."

The attorney took one step toward the witness. "Now, Mr. Barkman," he said, "can you tell me why assassins who had so carefully staged this tragedy to appear accidental should leave behind them two handkerchiefs, with eye-holes cut in them, thrust carelessly into a vase on a table? They might be found, and that discovery would, at once, negative the theory of accidental death."

"They wanted to get rid of the masks."

"But if they wore no masks? Is it not inconceivable that they would have placed them there to jeopardize all that they had so carefully planned?"

The witness was watching the attorney, the dogged look deepening in his face.

"If they didn't wear masks, of course they wouldn't have put them there—it would have been a fool thing."

The attorney moved out closer to the witness. The point, as one might say, of his voice seemed to sharpen.

"Now, Mr. Barkman, if these masks were not put into the vase on the table by the assassins, then they were put there by somebody else; and if they were not put there on the night of the robbery, they were put there later; and if they were put there by some one later, it was one who had access to the house later; and if they were put there by one having access to the house after it was established the banker did not die from natural cause, then they were put there to deceive."

He paused, and his final sentence descended like a hammer:

"And the deception in presenting false evidence of *two* men would consist in the fact that but *one* man had, in fact, accomplished the crime."

The prosecuting attorney was on his feet.

"Your honor," he said, "this is all built up upon the theory that the assassins did not wear masks. There is no evidence to support such a theory. The handkerchiefs that the assassins took off of their faces and hid in the vase are here in the case for everybody to see."

The attorney for the prisoners put out his hand and took up the two polka-dot handkerchiefs which were lying on the table before him.

"It is the cleverest criminal," he said, "who always makes the most striking blunder. The accomplished assassin of Lord William Russell carried away the knife with which his victim was supposed to have cut his own throat. When the human intelligence, set on murder, undertakes to falsify the order of events, the absurdity of its error increases with its cunning." He shook the two handkerchiefs out and stretched them in his fingers.

"They are here for everybody to see," he echoed, "and if everybody will look, he will see that these two handkerchiefs were never tied around the faces of assassins; he will see—everybody—that, while these handkerchiefs have eye-holes cut in them, the corners of them are as smooth and uncreased as though they had been ironed; if they had been tied around the faces of assasssins, they would show the strain and the fold of the knot!"

He turned now toward the judge.

"Your honor," he said, "the elaborate ingenuity of this whole criminal plan is utterly beyond the feeble intelligence of these prisoners. It is the work of some competent person; some person well known to the decedent; some person who knew a disguise to be useless; some one who had access to the house and was able to set up the evidence of a second theory after the first had failed—such an one was the assassin of Hiram Halloway."

THERE was absolute silence in the court-room. The witness sat gripping the arms of his chair, his face distended as with some physical pressure.

The big attorney, at the end of his significant pause, added a final sentence:

"And now, that we have found the money, we can name the man!"

The prosecuting attorney, utterly astonished, put the question, the answer to which the whole court-room awaited:

"Found the money! Where?"

The big lawyer sat down in his chair; his huge body relaxed; his face assumed its vague placidity and his voice descended into its old, deep-seated, dwindling whine:

"It's sewed up in the lining of Mr. Barkman's coat. Lyin' Louie felt it when he posed him for the jury."

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In Red and Gold

By Samuel Merwin

Author of "Temperamental Henry," "The Hills of Han," etc.

THE STORY

ON BOARD a river steamer, leaving Shanghai in 1911 for a voyage up the Yangtze-Kiang, are brought together: Dawley Kane, an American millionaire; his son, Rocky Kane, a much-spoiled society youth; Braker, the financier's secretary, and a Japanese traveling assistant; Miss Andrews, an American girl, and her older companion, Miss Means; and three notorious characters of the China Coast, Tex Connor, The Manila Kid—and a girl, Dixie Carmichael. Soon after the start, Connor and the Kid draw young Kane and others into a card game, which the mate of the steamer, Griggsby Doane, quietly and forcefully breaks up. By way of substitute diversion the Kid then arranges a boxing match between a Chinese "prizefighter" whose manager he has been, and Doane. Doane consents to take part, understanding that the bout is only to afford a little exercise for him and amusement for the men. It proves to be an occasion for gambling on the result and a disgusting fight, against a foul opponent, whom Doane is compelled to knock out. In the fight Doane's physical strength and force of personality impress every one, including the elder Kane. The Viceroy of Nanking, who has come aboard later with his daughter and retinue, is present at the fight; he afterward invites Doane to dinner. Rocky Kane, during the fight, attempts, in a chance encounter on deck, a brutal flirtation with a Chinese girl who he does not know is the daughter of the Viceroy, later sending her an insulting clandestine note, which comes to the captain. Doane goes to his cabin to warn him of his error and finds him smoking opium.

CHAPTER THREE
Miss Hui Fei
I

THE luncheon-table of his Excellency was simply set, with two chairs of carven blackwood, behind a high painted screen of six panels.

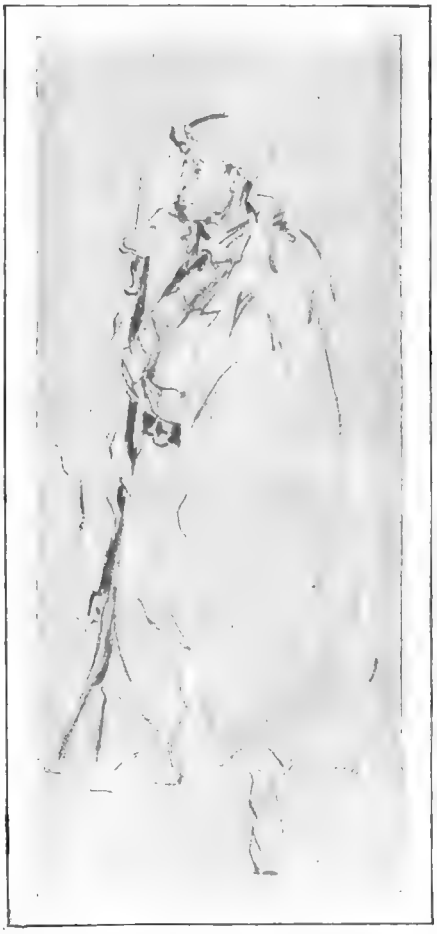
It was at this screen that the First Mate (left by a smiling attendant) gazed with a frown of incredulity. Cap in hand, he stepped back and studied the painting—a landscape representing a range of mountains rising above mist in great rock-masses, chasms where tortured trees clung, towering, jagged peaks, all partly obscured by softly luminous vapor—a scene of power and beauty. Much of the brighter color had faded into the prevailing tones of old ivory yellow, shading into something near Rembrandt brown, though the original reds and blues still held vividly in the lower right foreground, where were pictured, very, small, exquisite in detail yet of as trifling importance in the majestic scheme of the painting, as are man and his works in all sober Chinese thought when considered in relation to the grim majesty of Nature, a little friendly cluster of houses, men at work, children at play, domestic animals, a stream with water-buffalo, a bridge, a wayfarer riding a donkey, and cultivated fields.

The ideographic signature was in rich old gold, inscribed with unerring decorative instinct on a flat rock surface.

The Mate bent low and looked closely at the seal characters and the brush-work; then stepped around an end panel and examined the texture of the silk.

"Ah," it was a musical, deep voice, speaking in the Mandarin tongue, "you admire my screen, Griggsby Doane." The name was pronounced in English.

His Excellency wore a short jacket of pale yellow over a skirt of blue, both embroidered in large circles of lotus-flowers around centers of conventional good-fortune designs, in which the swastika was a leading motive. His bared head was shaved only at the sides, as the top had long been bald. He looked gentle and kind as he stood, leaning on his cane and extending a wrinkled hand; smiling in the fashion of forthright friendship. The thin little gray beard, the unobtrusive, courteous eyes, the calm manner, all gave him an appearance of simplicity that might make it momentarily difficult to think of him as the negotiator of the tangled problems of statesmanship involved in the expansion of Japan, the man who very nearly convinced Europe of American good faith during the agitated discussion and correspondence that arose out of the "Open Door" proposals of John Hay, a man known among the observant and informed in London, Paris and Washington as a great statesman and a greater gentleman.



Brown, deep-chested men, picturesque in their loose blue trousers.

"I thought at first"—thus the Mate, touched by the fine honor done him (an honor that would, he quickly felt, demand tact on the bridge)—"that it was a genuine Kuo Hsi."

"No. A copy."

"So I see. A Ming copy—at least the silk appears to be Ming—the heavy single strand, closely woven. And the seals date very closely. If it were woven of double strands, even in the warp alone, I should not hesitate to call it a genuine Northern Sung."

"You observe closely, Griggsby Doane. It is supposed that Ch'uian Shih made this copy." His smile was now less one of kindness and courtesy than of genuine pleasure. "You shall see the original."

"You have that also, Your Excellency?"

"In my home at Huang Chow."

"I have never seen a genuine painting of Kuo Hsi. It would be a great privilege. I have read some of the sayings attributed to him, as taken down by his son. One I recall—'If the artist, without realizing his ideal, paint landscapes with a careless heart, it is like throwing earth upon a deity, or casting impurities into the clean wind!'"

"Yes," added His Excellency, almost eagerly, "and this—'To have in landscape the opportunity of seeing water and peaks, of hearing the cry of monkeys and the song of birds, without going from the room.'"

Servants appeared bearing covered dishes. His Excellency placed the Mate in the seat commanding the wider view of the river. A clear broth was served, followed by stewed shellfish with cassia mushrooms, steamed sharks' fins served with crab-meat and ham, roast duck stuffed with young pine-needles, and preserved pomegranates, carambolas and plums, followed by small cups of rice wine.

II

THE conversation lingered with the great Sung painters, passing naturally then to the conflict during the eleventh and twelfth centuries between the free vitality of Buddhist and Taoist thought and the deadening formalism of the Confucian tradition.

And Doane's thoughts, as he listened or quietly spoke, dwelt on the attainments and character of this conspicuous man who was so simple and so friendly. His Excellency had spoken his own full name, Griggsby Doane, which would mean that the wide-reaching, instantly responsive facilities for gathering information that may be set at work by the glance of a viceroy's eye or a movement of his jeweled finger, had been brought into play within the twenty-four hours.

"My heart is there in the Sung dynasty," his Excellency said. "I never look upon

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the old canals of Hang Chow or the ruins of stone-walled lotus-gardens by the Si-hu without sadness. And Kai-feng-fu to-day wrings my heart."

"Truly," mused Doane, "it was in the days of T'ang and Sung that the mind and soul of great China so nearly found its freedom."

"You indeed understand, Griggsby Doane!" The two English words stood out with odd emphasis in the musical flow of cultured Chinese speech. "Had the spirit lived, China would to-day, I like to think, have Korea and Manchuria and Mongolia and Sin Kiang. China would not to-day bear a piteous smile on the lips, turning the head to hide tears of shame while the Russians absorb our northern frontiers and the French draw tribute from Annam and Yunnan; while the English control this great valley of the Yangtze; while the Germans drive their mailed fist into Shantung, and the Japanese send their spies throughout all our land and stand insolently at the very gate of the Forbidden City. I could not, perhaps, speak my heart freely to one of my own countrymen, but to you I can say, Confucian scholar though they may term me, that since what you call the thirteenth century there has been a gradual paralysis of the will in China, a softening of the political brain. You will permit an old man this latitude. I have served China without thought of self during nearly fifty years. To the old Buddha I was ever a loyal servant. If toward the new Emperor and the Empress Dowager I find it impossible to feel so deeply, my heart is yet devoted to the throne and to my people. If while sent abroad in service of my country it has been given me to see much of merit in Western ways, it is not that I have become a revolutionist, a traitor to the government of my ancestors."

There was a light in the kindly eyes, a strong ring in the deep voice. He went on:

"No, I am not a traitor—it is not that. It is that my country has suffered, is now prostrate with a long sickness. She must be helped; but she must as well help herself. She is like one who has lain too long abed. She must think, arise, act. With my poor eyes, I can see no other hope for her. Even though I myself may suffer, I can not, in truth to my own faith, punish those who, loving China as deeply as I myself love her, yet feel that they must goad her until she awakens from her pitiful sleep of more than six centuries. Nor am I a republican. China is not like your country. In an imperial throne I must believe. Yet, she must listen to all, study all, draw from all. Freedom of thought there must be. We must not longer worship books and the dead. We must learn to look about us and on before."

Their chairs were drawn about to the windows. Slowly the wide river slipped off astern.

"But you, Griggsby Doane, why are you here? This is not the life for which you so laboriously and so worthily prepared yourself. I knew of you over in T'ainan-fu. You were a true servant of your faith. After the dreadful year of the Boxers you returned to your task. And during the trouble in nineteen hundred and seven, the fighting with the Great Eye Society in Hansi, you conducted yourself with bravery. I was at Sian-fu that year, and was well informed. Yet you gave up the church mission."

The Mate's eyes were fixed gloomily on the long vista of the river. For a moment it seemed as if he would speak, and the viceroy, seeing his lips apart, leaned a little way forward; but then the lips were closed tightly and the great head bent deliberatively forward.

"I knew," continued his Excellency, "when the Asiatic Company was negotiating with me the contract for rebuilding the banks of the Grand Canal in Kiang-su that you had gone from T'ainan, and that you had, as well, left the church. You had even gone from China."

"That was in nineteen nine," said Doane in the somber voice of one who thinks moodily aloud. "I was in America then."

"Yes, it was in the year nineteen nine. For a time those negotiatons hung, I recall, on the question of the means to be employed in dealing with local resentments. The trouble over the Ho Shan Company in Hansi, of which you knew so much and which you met with such noble courage, had taught us all to move with caution."

"My position in that Hansi trouble has not been clearly understood, your excellency. I was there only a short time, and was ill at that."

The viceroy smiled, kindly, wisely. "You went alone and on foot from T'ainan-fu to So T'ung in the face of a Looker attack, and yourself settled that tragic business. You then walked, without even a night's rest, the fifty-five li from T'ainan to Hung Chan. There, at the city gate, you were attacked and severely wounded, and crawled to the house of a Christian native. But while still weak and in a fever you walked three hundred li to Ping Yang and made your way through the Looker Army into Monsieur Pourmont's compound."

Too many promises had smiled at Doane—smiled and faded to nothing—to permit an easy hope of anything new and beautiful.

HE PRONOUNCED the two words "Monsieur Pourmont" in French. What a remarkable old man he was—mentally all alive, sensitive as a youth to the quick currents of life! The accuracy of his information, like his memory, was surprising. Though, to the Westerner, every normal Chinese memory is that. Merely learning the language builds a memory. Most surprising it was that so deep attention had been given to Doane's own small case. The fact bewildered; was slow in coming home. For T'ang was a great man; his proper preoccupations were many; that he was a poet, and had early aspired to the laureateship, was commonly known—indeed, Doane had somewhere his own translation of T'ang's "Ode to the Rich Earth," from the scroll in the author's calligraphy owned by Pao Ting

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They visited long after dinner. The girl, lying still in her chair, listened.

Chuan at T'ainan-fu. As an amateur in the art of his own land, of fine taste and sound historical background, he was known everywhere, his collection of early paintings, porcelains, jades and jewels being admitedly the most valuable remaining in China. And he was reputed to be the richest individual not of the royal clans (excepting perhaps Yuan Shi K'ai).

A contrast not untinged with a passing bitterness arose in Doane's mind. Here before him quietly sat this so-called yellow man who was more competent perhaps than any other to select his own art treasures and write his own poems and state papers; whose journals, known to exist, must inevitably, if not lost in a war-torn land, take their place as a part of China's history; a man who was at once manufacturer, financier and statesman, on whom for a decade a weakening throne had leaned. While in the cabin forward was a great white man as truly representative of the new civilization as was T'ang of the old; yet who hired men of special knowledge to select the art treasures that would be left, one day, in his name and as a monument to his culture, who even employed a trained writer to pen the work that he proposed unblushingly to call his "autobiography." For such a man as Dawley Kane, whatever his manners—Doane felt now—knew only the power of money. Through that alone his genius functioned—the rest was a lie. On the one hand was culture, on the other something else. The thought bit into his brain.

But his Excellency had not finished.

"And there, my dear Griggsby Doane, while still suffering from your wound, you learned that those in Monsieur Pourmont's compound were cut off from communication with their nationals at Peking. You at once volunteered to go again, alone, through the Looker lines to the railhead with messages, and successfully did so. Do you wonder, my dear young friend, that knowing this, and more, of your honesty and personal force from my one-time assistant, Pao Ting Chuan, of T'ainan-fu, that I pressed strongly on the gentleman from New York who represented the Asiatic Company my desire that they secure you to act as their resident director? And do you wonder that I regretted your refusal to act?"

III

THIS statement came to Doane as a surprise.

"They offered me a position, yes," he said, pondering on the inexplicable ways in which the currents of life meet and cross. "But they told me nothing of your interest."

His Excellency smiled. "It might have raised your price. They would think of that. The sharpest trading, Griggsby Doane, is not done in the Orient. That I have learned from a long lifetime of struggling against the aggresssions of white nations. During the discussion of the concerted loan to China—you recall it?—they talked of lending us a hundred million dollars, gold. To read your New York papers was to think that we were almost to be given the money. It seemed really a philanthropy. But do you know what their left hands were doing while their right hands waved in a fine gesture of aid to struggling China? These were the terms. First they subtracted a large commission—that for the bankers themselves; then, what with stipulations of various sorts as to the uses to which the money—or the credit—was to be put, mostly in railway purchases and war material from their own hongs at further huge profits to themselves, they whittled it down until the actual money to be placed in our hands, to be expended under our own direction, amounted to about fifteen millions. And with that went immense new concessions—really the signing away of an empire—and new foreign supervision of our internal affairs. For all these privileges we were to pay an annual interest and later repay the full amount, one hundred millions. It was quite unbearable." He sighed. "But what is poor old China to do?"

Doane nodded gravely. "I felt all that—that sort of thing—when I talked with the Asiatic people. Not that I blamed them, of course. It is a point of view much larger than any of them; they are but part of a great tendency. I couldn't go into it."

"Why not?" The Viceroy's keen eyes dropped to the slightly faded blue uniform, then rested again on the strong face.

"The past few years—I will pass over the details—have been—well, not altogether happy for me. I have been puzzled. All the rich years of my younger manhood were given to the mission work. But I had to leave the church. At first I felt a joy in simple hard work—I am very strong—but hard work alone could not satisfy my thoughts."

"No. No."

"For a time I believed that the solution of my personal problem lay in taking the plunge into commercial life. I had come to feel, out there, that business was, after all, the natural expression of a man's active nature in our time."

"Yes. Doubtless it is."

"It was in that state of mind that I returned home—to the States. But it

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He was then, after all the years incurably romantic.

proved impossible. I am not a trader. It was too late. My character, such as it was and is, had been formed and hardened in another mold. I talked with old friends, but only to discover that we had between us no common tongue of the spirit. Perhaps if I had entered business early, as they did, I would have found my early ideals warped gradually around to the prevailing point of view."

"The point stands out, though," said the viceroy, "that you did not enter business. You chose a more difficult course, and one which leaves you, in the middle years, without the means to direct your life effectively and in comfort."

"Yes," mused Doane. "I feel that, of course. And it is hard, very hard, to lose one's country. Yet——"

His voice dropped. He sat, elbow on crossed knees, staring at the ever-changing river. When he spoke again, the bitter undertone was no longer in his voice. He was gentler, but still puzzled; a man who has suffered a loss that he can not understand.

"All my traditions," he said, "my memories, were of simple friendly communities, a land of earnest religion, of political freedom. In my thoughts as a younger man certain great figures stood out—Washington, Lincoln, Charles Sumner, Wendell Phillips, Phillips Brooks and—yes, Henry Ward Beecher. I had deeply felt Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell and Whittier. The Declaration of Independence could still fire my blood. And it was such a land of simple, earnest faith that I tried for so many years, however ineffectually, to represent here in China. To be sure, disquieting thoughts came—church disunity, the spectacle of unbridled license among so many of my fellow countrymen in the Coast ports, the methods of certain of our great corporations in pushing their wares in among your people. But even when I found it necessary to leave the church, I still believed deeply in my country."

He paused to control a slight unsteadiness of voice; then went on:

"May I ask if you, your Excellency, after your long sojourn in Europe, have not come home to meet with something of the same difficulty, to find yourself looking at your own people with the eyes of a stranger, receiving such an impression as only a stranger can receive?"

"Indeed, yes!" cried the viceroy softly, with deep feeling. "It is the most difficult moment, I have sometimes felt, in a man's life. It is the summit of loneliness, for there is no man among his friends who can share his view, and there is none who would not misunderstand and censure him. And yet, a country, a people, like a city, does present to the strange eye a complete impression, it exhibits clearly outlined characteristics that can be observed in no other way. Even the stranger loses that clear, true impression on very short acquaintance. He then becomes, like all the others, a part of the picture he has once seen."

"It is so, your Excellency. My country, in that first, startled, clear glance, affected me—I may as well use the word—unpleasantly. It was utterly different from anything I had known, a trader's paradise, a land of salesmen and salesmanship; a place of unbelievable confusion, of an activity that bewildered, rushing to what end I could not understand."

He was speaking now not only in the Chinese language but in the very idiom as well, generalizing rhetorically as the Chinese do. It was almost as if the words came from a Chinese mind.

IV

THEY were silent for a long time. Then the viceroy asked, in his gently abrupt way:

"Why did you leave the church?"

"Because I sinned."

"Against the church?"

"That, and my own faith."

"Were you asked to leave?"

"No."

"They knew of your sin?"

"I told them."

"Yet they would have kept you?"

"Yes. My own feeling was that my superior temporized."

"He knew your value."

"I can not say as to that. But he wished me to marry again. I couldn't do that—not in the spirit intended. Not as I felt."

"We are different, Griggsby Doane, you and I. I am a Manchu, you an American. The customs of our two lands are very different. What would seem a sin to you, might not seem so to me. Yet I, too, have a conscience to which I must answer. I believe I understand you. It is, I see, because of your conscience that you sit before me now, on this boat and in this uniform, a man, as your great Edward Everett Hale has said, without a country."

He paused, and filled again the little pipe-bowl, studied it absently as his wrinkled fingers worked the tobacco. His nails were trimmed short, like those of a white man. Doane thought swiftly of the man's dramatic past, sent out as he had been to become a citizen of the world, by a nation that would in very necessity fail to understand the resulting changes in his outlook. There was his daughter; she would be almost an American, after years of college life. And she, now, would be a problem indeed! What could he hope to make of her life in this Asia where woman, like labor in his own country, was a commodity? It would be absorbingly interesting, were it possible, to peep into that smooth-running old brain and glimpse the problems there. They were gossiping about him. His stately figure was to-day the center about which coiled the life and

(*Continued on page 98*)

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The Proud Piece

By Charles Saxby

A most unapproachable Miss, this spoiled heiress. Desirable as honey, but as friendly as the bee to the gatherer thereof. Fate, and a certain devil-may-care roamer, with a ready tongue and a sure-winner way, contribute to her education in amiability. All of which is delightful reading—different from the previous stories of Saxby and from those to come.

THE fence was decisive. Barbed and high, reinforced by clumps of prickly-pear, it stretched away across the shelf of level land extending from the edge of the cliffs to the base of the mountains in the distance.

On the outside of it was sheer nature, an expanse of silver-gray sage scattered with cactus. Inside of it the bean-field fell away in unbroken green, high above the sea, until a jutting spur cut off the view. Through it the road wound invitingly, but the gate was secured by a sullen lock and chain, and The Mocking-Bird drew back, scanning it with reluctant admiration.

"Exclusive," he murmured to the wind, to the waves, or possibly to himself. "Brutally exclusive, but not without a certain magnificence, in a sort of 'you be damned' way."

He drew back, measuring the barbs, the grim spines of the prickly-pears, with a practised eye.

"Around and through, equally blocked. However, there is still another dimension."

Lightly as a cat he scaled the gate, perching on the top bar. Apparently pleased with the view from there, he remained, easing the blanket and ruck-sack off his shoulders. The August sun was potent, but the breeze, that perpetual summer trade-wind of the California coast, held its accustomed chill. He bared his head to it, letting it play among his hair.

As he perched there, clad in tones of faded olive and gray, worn army breeches and puttees, a gray flannel shirt, bachelorly buttonless about the neck, there seemed a certain appropriateness about the name by which he was best known. There was a sort of fugitiveness in his pose, as if he were ready at any moment to break into skimming flight; and his gaze held a bright impudence.

As he pursed his lips to their accustomed whistle, the likeness was increased—a melodic gushing, largely formless, like a thin fountain of sound that sparkled in the mere joy of its own beauty. Then it ceased as he took a keen survey of his surroundings: the hard sapphire of the sea, that upheld shelf of bean land, and the mountains rising abruptly, their slopes wine red under the growth of chaparral and yucca.

"The Sierra de Las Tardes," he murmured, then translated, "The Evening Mountains."

For three days he had watched them as he tramped across the lower lands to the south. In the mornings they were hidden beneath a pall of fog, at noon invisible behind a blue blaze of vapor; only with the westering light did they gradually emerge to view, to stand sharply out against the peach-blow skies of sunset.

For three days, as he gazed at them, mystic and gracious with their lure of distance, his thought had been, "When I get there—" Now he was here, and the only answer to that half-formed question seemed to be, "Well, what of it?"

A shadow, that was not one of those floating wisps of sea fog overhead, fell across his face; a wonder that, with sun, warmth and peace all about him, he should still be unsatisfied. In those months when life had been simply an unending struggle through abysmal mud from one hell hole to another, just those three things had seemed all that one could possibly desire. But now that he had them, he had still that impulse of going on. In half a dozen sunny cities of the coast a welcome awaited him, but here he sat, solitary and cogitating, on top of a gate at the foot of the Evening Mountains.

"That gate is locked."

IT cut across his musings; the tone of it made of the statement a demand; the surprise, when he had imagined himself so entirely alone, almost jeopardized his insecure balance. Since he had heard no sound of her pony's hoofs, she must have been there all the time, half-hidden by that mass of prickly-pears and Spanish dagger, and probably she had overheard his slightly ridiculous self-communings.

Merely a girl, after all, striding her mount with a Western poise; trim and workmanlike in her pongee habit, loose gloves and broad hat. She ought to be pretty, he thought, with that corn-colored hair and those gray eyes. In fact she was, he admitted, with a characteristic fairness, but that icy tone of hers had clouded his perceptions with irritation.

"So I see," he replied. "In fact, that is precisely why I climbed it."

He smiled as he said that, and a trifle impudently, for he judged that was what would probably most annoy her. She was so evidently not the kind of young lady who is accustomed to be smiled at by perfect strangers.

"The gate was locked to keep out intruders."

"Gates generally are locked for that reason, are they not?" he asked, in bright logic.

She frowned at that, for the aptness of his speech complicated matters. Into her gaze, which had been as cold as her tone, crept a shadow of perplexity; she seemed none too pleased to encounter so much grace in so vagabond a figure.

"A locked gate," he went airily on. "The sign and seal of social authority and those rights of property by the law and state decreed. And, on the other side, an individual, given—however erroneously—to supposing himself as free as the eagle that is his native emblem. There is the problem; if mademoiselle will take the opposing side we can reason it together."

"There is nothing to reason about," she retorted. "Strangers are not admitted through that gate; this is the Rancho de Los Palos."

"A—h!"

As The Mocking-Bird emitted the sound it held volumes of comprehension, and even more as he went on.

"A Spanish grant, I believe—'All that twenty leagues between the Sierra de Las Tardes and the sea, from the Cañon Santa Ysabel on the south to the border of the Mission Lands of Todos Santos on the north. Given under my hand and seal in the Cabildo of Monterey in this year of Our Blessed Saviour Eighteen Hundred and Eleven. Ygnacio de Figueroa y Micheltorena, Gobernador.'"

She had half-reined her pony to leave him, annoyed that her conversation with a perfect stranger should have gone so far, but she could not resist pausing for a last command.

"I warn you that we arrest all trespassers on the ranch."

"But," he spread his hands in a charming gesture of deprecation, "if mademoiselle will observe, I am not trespassing on the ranch. I am merely claiming a morsel of her hospitality by resting on her gate."

"But what are you doing out here at all?"

"I go to Todos Santos."

"The automobile boulevard——"

"Is a glare of asphalt, hot, distressing and vulgarly traveled. I prefer a more private way."

"And what do you go to Todos Santos for?"

"For my private business," he answered quietly.

SHE felt as if she had inadvertently touched on something of great importance to him; the change in his manner was evidently meant, like a locked gate in his own affairs, to warn off intruders. She could not resist the impulse to linger a moment and play a little on the edges of that.

For the first time she really looked at him; a travel-stained young figure, twenty-six at most, but clean to his finger-tips. The wet sleekness of his hair, a powdering of dried sea salt on the bronze of his throat, showed that he was fresh from a dip in some cove beneath the bluffs. A lean, smooth face, deeply tanned and a trifle overbold, but unconsciously she had already noticed how, when in repose, the

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lips drooped in a curve that was almost of pain. That flannel shirt was shabby, but there were muscles under it and to her came that ineradicable feminine instinct for harnessing loose vitality to something useful.

"You are looking for work?"

"If there is one thing for which I am not looking, it is that."

She sighed impatiently, gazing off across her bean-field, ripe for harvesting.

"Surely in these days it is every man's duty——"

He interrupted her again, courteously, but with an implacable firmness.

"I was discharged only a week ago after two years of doing my duty, and frankly I am fed up with it."

"Oh—you were overseas?"

He nodded, grateful to her for avoiding the term "in France." If there were one place in all the world of which he was heartily sick, it was that same land of France.

"I lost some one there—very dear to me."

Her face, as she said that, showed a slight breaking of its controlled perfection, as of the spring through frost, and he nodded in a dark agreement.

"So did I."

They were silent, the one lost in memories, the other, even through her own memories, still studying him.

HE was quieter now, and darker, but in his quietness there showed more suggestion of possibilities. It struck her—she was rather pleased with the thought—that that surface he had shown might be like the sheen of the sun on a wind-stirred pool; it was only when the pool stilled that one realized that there might be depths in it. Something of depths stirring in herself showed in the added quietness of her next words.

"Then we can understand each other in that, at least."

"I'll never understand," he burst vehemently out. "He was younger than I—only twenty-three. He had everything to live for—and yet he is dead—while I——"

He shrugged in infinite non-comprehension, then lapsed to silence. It was an impulse of kindness that spoke next in her. That was the trouble with it, for there are few things that can be so unconsciously cutting as kindness, unless mixed with understanding. And this of hers came as though coming from a height.

"You say you are going to Todos Santos? If you cross the ranch, it will save you twenty miles. You will find a bunk-house two miles farther on and I will tell the foreman to give you some supper and a bed."

He was looking at her again, not with resentment, but with a certain perplexity, as though unable to credit that so much charm should be accompanied by so little intuition. There was finality as he spoke, dropping again into that foreign half-mocking form of address.

"Mademoiselle is too kind. Permission to cross Los Palos, with supper, a foreman and a bed in addition. *C'est épatant*—it overwhelms, but——"

He uncoiled his legs from the gate bars, adjusting his trappings for departure. "But my errand in Todos Santos is a peculiar one. The fulfilling of a pledge, in fact; foolish, perhaps, but even so I prefer it should be done alone and in a way untainted by assistance."

With that he went, vaulting from the gate to that outside of it over which she had no control. She had never thought of that outside until just then, and she wondered why it should suddenly so strike her. The ten-mile, haughtily guarded strip, all that was left of the ancient Spanish grant, seemed to dwindle to a pin-point in comparison with that vast outside into which he was preparing to disappear. She touched her pony, riding to the gate.

"Please—I did not mean it in that way at all. We have to keep people out just now. They are trying to force a public road on us and the case comes up soon in court. I did not mean to hurt you."

He paused, smiling delightfully up at her through the wooden bars. "The hurt was one I brought with me; I am hoping to leave some of its bitterness in Todos Santos."

SHE could not understand, but, in some inexplicable way, their positions seemed to have reversed. The cause of it was probably his leap to outside where she had no authority. She felt now as though it were he who was keeping her in, and she felt also as if it were necessary for her satisfaction to have him accept a favor at her hands. All her life she had been so serenely conscious of how much lay in her power to do for people, and it was so rarely, if ever, that she had met any one who was not willing to have her do it.

"It is a hard trail over the mountains. If you will give me your name, I will leave orders to have you passed through the ranch in case you change your mind."

He hesitated, half inclined to give her that nickname of his, then he substituted his real one instead.

"I shall not change my mind, but my name is Blythe."

"The way through the ranch is much, much easier."

"I thank you, but I meant exactly what I said."

She frowned at that, but the frown was really for herself. Looking down at him, she had felt, somewhere within herself, a faint thrill, like the ringing of a distant and muffled alarm. Half breathlessly she asked herself, "What has been said—how did we reach this so quickly?" And yet she could not tell what she meant by that.

To offset that alarm she fell back again upon her comforting advantages. "I have friends in Todos Santos. If you need help——"

He looked up in grave question. "Why should you think I need help?"

"Why—" she paused in surprise that he should not see things as she did, and with it came irritation because somehow it was important to her that he should do so.

"You are traveling on foot. That is a little unusual, is it not?"

"Is it?"

He regarded her again, as if he might be making a conscientious effort to pierce her viewpoint. With his next words he did pierce it, so effectively that she could almost see the poor thing flapping its death throes.

"It seems to me that I remember a lot of us traveling on foot for many months," he said slowly, "nearly two million of us, all on foot; but I heard no objections raised to it."

With that, and a bow, he left her, tramping lightly and bareheaded across the mesa. He thought that she had ridden closer to the gate, he even fancied he heard her calling after him, but it might have been merely the freshening breeze through the chaparral. At least it was indistinct enough—and he was angry enough—to give him excuse for not heeding it. So he waded on, through waist-high masses of blue lupin, to where a trail ascended the slope.

It was forty miles to Todos Santos that way; two days of strenuous "hiking," for in the Evening Mountains the trails are steep. But he had grub enough, and better the hard freedom of the trail than that superiorly offered bunk-house bed.

"I guess the war is over, all right," he mused grimly. "While it was on and they had need of us— 'Oh, it's please to walk in front, sir, when the guns begin to play.' "

He considered the girl, shaking his head more in sorrow than in anger.

"Such a pity. Pretty as a picture, and good stuff in her too, but——"

High in the hush of the hills, under a sliver of moon, he made his camp. Some oaks and sycamores, a stream gushing down over blue-gray boulders, a huge yucca stalk mysteriously rattling its dried pods in the still air—it was all that he had so longed for, and as he broke his hardtack and sipped his creamless coffee he wondered at the ache that was still upon him.

Some of that, of course, was Jimmie Wyle's death, the loss he had hinted to the girl and which had brought from her that flash of sympathetic understanding. It was very present with him that night, now he was nearing the mission they had half laughingly, but with a covered seriousness, promised each other to fulfil. Such a futile, unnecessary death it had been, on the very day before the armistice had been signed; with the blood that had welled from his friend's body in his arms, something had welled out and passed away from Blythe himself.

HE saw himself as he had been in the years before: A born young nomad, skimming up and down the whole sunny length of the State in a defiant, rather hard sort of gaiety; more liked than liking, more taking than giving, cased always in an invulnerable independence. It had been no task for The Mocking-Bird to earn a living: sheep herding in the high Sierras, as an adventure only and not too much of it, for those fellows all go dippy; time-keeper at the borax works in the superheated sink of Death Valley; then doing a whistling act in small-time vaudeville—but not much of that either, it was too Willy-boy and wearisome; then out with chain and level on the line of the great aqueduct creeping snakily across the desert: but always, sooner or later, back to the little scenic studio in Los Angeles—a quaint place, where the moon flowers crept in through the chinks of the paint loft and where real but impecunious artists, surreptitiously earning bread and butter at the despised craft of scene painting, sneered enviously as he would dash off some design all bad drawing and haunting charm.

It was that life which he was trying to recapture, but he was beginning to see that between him and it the last two years lay like a red and impassable gash.

He lay long awake, so still that all about him he heard the set of the night going

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definitely about its business of darkness; a deepening murmur of the stream, as though five people were in its depths, whispering to each other of laughing secrets. Another moment and he would hear what they were saying; but the moment never quite came. The rustle of the chaparral in the steady flow of the night air setting down the cañon to the sea; the squeaking of furtive wild things all about him; a thin and elfin melancholy, like the bitter-sweet remembrance of some happier life.

He thought sleep had claimed him, then he suddenly sat up in his blanket wide awake and, to his surprise, angry as well.

"That girl!" he exclaimed, pounding the ruck-sack on which his head had been pillowed. "She's class—the real thing—but Lord defend us, what a proud piece!"

II

ON THE slopes above the town the towers of the old Mission of Todos Santos rise whitely against the misty purples of El Pico. At their base, three days later, The Mocking-Bird curled comfortably in the full blaze of the sun, waiting for the morning service to end.

Across the road huge pepper-trees dripped gum and shade. Above a brown adobe wall waved green fountains of date fronds and against them some fan palms rose in a rigid detachment. He eyed the latter with some disfavor.

"You look so respectable," he remarked. "Like poor but honest females rather aghast in the company of goddesses."

He contemplated that sentence with all the admiration it deserved.

"Maybe that will hold you a while," he nodded to the offending vegetables, then turned another side to his frying-pan of stone and sun.

It was some minor saint's day and down the steps wound a chanting procession with banners, gold-crusted vestments and candles pale in the noon glare. In the August freedom from the grasshopper hordes of winter tourists there was a comfortable intimacy about it all. An acolyte, cherub-faced above his swinging censer, gave vent to an artless yawn. As they trooped and chanted themselves by, the congregation glanced amiably at Blythe and accepted him as one of themselves; his cigaret and that place in the sun proclaimed him a born Californian.

A Gregorian "Amen," followed by a burst of cheerful and mundane chatter, proclaimed the service over. A motor-car glided up to the foot of the steps and from it stepped a girl.

Disguised though she was in gossamer summer attire, veiled and decorously powdered, Blythe recognized her instantly as the girl of the Los Palos gate. He could have singled her out anywhere by her mere aliveness and the poise of her chin. After her she dragged by leash and collar a half-grown bull pup. Blythe had flattened himself against the wall to escape her notice, but her quick eyes had already seen him and they were too close to avoid the evident recognition. She nodded coldly.

"So you got to Todos Santos after all?"

"I generally do get to where I am going," he smiled. Then his tone took on an edge. "Do you want to ruin that dog?"

She looked disgustedly down at the pup, which had dropped flat on the ground, holding desperately back with all four paws, every muscle tense with terror of the girl, the place, the people and the whole disturbing world in general.

"From his pedigree he should be a thoroughbred," she said; "but it seems that he is only a cur after all."

"How long have you had him?" demanded Blythe.

"I picked him from a litter of seven in the kennel half an hour ago."

Blythe crouched and laid his hand on the dog's head. "Poor little beastie, three months old and never been out of his pen or away from his brothers and sisters."

"I am disgusted with it—I hate a coward."

"How brave would you be if, as a child of three, you were dragged from your nursery by a stranger with a chain!"

"The wretched thing seems to have no spirit at all."

The Mocking-Bird stood up, looking straightly at her. A charming figure, young, slight, exquisite; even the full glare of noon had no terrors for her. But her face, he noted, was a shade too finely drawn, and there was petulance about the mouth. She was in complete contrast to the travel-stained and shabby young man, but the genuineness of her position was shown by her indifference to the speculative glances cast at them by the dispersing congregation.

"He has spirit enough to resist you, hopeless though it is," he said quietly. "Well, old fellow, how about it?"

He was stroking the puppy's head again, and under the touch of his fingers the muzzle, blackly velvet, beautifully ugly, quivered in relaxation and laid itself across Blythe's instep.

"Bones—," he addressed the dog, "we've got to change our habits, you and I."

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Merely a girl, after all, striding her mount with a Western poise.

"It never did that to me," the girl exclaimed.

"Because you don't understand. What did you give for him—twenty-five dollars? If you will sell him I'd like to buy him from you," he went on at her nod. "And five for the collar and chain. Is it a bargain?"

"But what would you do with a dog?" she asked.

"I assure you that I can support him in the style to which he has been accustomed," he answered, with a smoothness that held a hint of danger. It caused her to flush, her teeth catching at her lip in chagrin.

"I could hardly sell it to you here."

"I wasn't going to pay you money in the face of half Todos Santos," said Blythe, rising with a weary patience. "Even such as I may read books of etiquette, you know—or consult Beatrice Fairfax. If you would give me your address, I could send you a check."

SHE could not understand why she was talking to him at all. It was not in consonance with her training, nor her custom. But his presence seemed to sweep her along in a current of feeling, mostly antagonistic. With some alarm she realized, now that he was here again, how much he had been in her thoughts the last three days.

There was anger between them now; scorn for scorn, open and unconcealable, as they faced each other in the murmurous drowse. There came to him a desire to take her by the shoulders and administer that shaking which would be so much to her soul's good. And she—he was making her ridiculous in her own eyes and she ached to hurt him. But in their amphitheaters up above the little gods gurgled in laughter, for they knew well that, between man and maid, any fire, even that of hatred, is better than the cool deadliness of indifference.

Then she changed to a figure of chilling courtesy, wrapping herself in the veil of a position so secure that she could even afford to be sweet. Blythe scented danger in that, but he was unable to forestall it.

"As I said, the dog hardly appeals to me, so I think I will let you have him. He will probably be much more at home with you for a master."

There was more to come, he saw, but it was too late to dodge the bolt. Down the steps a man was approaching them, with a glance of surprise for the girl's company; stout, gray, very much Palm Beached and panamaed, and evidently a personage.

"Well, Claire, I have done the Mission," he said, with the air of a proper task properly accomplished. "Is there anything else here that I must see?"

His atmosphere was that of an habitual hurry, and he consulted a watch as he spoke. "Eastern time on the Pacific slope," Blythe thought, contrasting that atmosphere with their *mañana* surroundings.

"No, Uncle; you have nobly done your duty," the girl laughed, a trifle artificially. "Allow me—Mr. Blythe—General Clelland."

A truly feminine little revenge, Blythe saw, as at the title the ingrained habit of two years overtook his muscles and his arm crooked upward in salute. Before he could execute it the girl's wrist-bag had fallen in the dust and courtesy took precedence of discipline.

Even as he handed it to her they were already moving off, leaving Blythe in a slight daze. Then the girl came swiftly back to him, speaking rapidly and apparently almost against her will.

"That was horrid of me. My uncle is not a real general—not of your kind—it was just that he was on the political staff of a governor of New York—and I couldn't let you salute him."

An astonishing creature, he reflected, standing there slightly dizzy at her changes. For an instant she seemed brighter, yet softer, as though some refreshing dew had fallen upon her.

"Oh, not at all—the merest courtesy—" he murmured idiotically. Then came a radiant smile that somehow warned him of danger.

"You still desire the dog?"

"I certainly do, poor little beast."

The smile still continued, but under it she had hardened at those words. "Why do you call him that?"

"Because I am sorry for any creature that may be absolutely at your mercy."

All about them the sun beat warmth and light. From over the palm-crested wall drifted fragrance of lemon and heliotrope, but amid it all they stood and glared, two vital young things filled with a ridiculous desire to hurt each other. Her smile thinned as she divined the sharpest thing to say.

"Then please take him—as a gift."

It was like a dash of ice-water in his face, and before he had recovered his breath she was gone, irrevocably this time, with a cloud of dust and a lingering trace of gasoline. Blythe stared impotently after the car, then down at the adoring puppy at his feet.

"And I don't even know her name," he groaned.

WOMANLIKE, she had scored again, giving with one hand and taking with the other. The puppy between his knees, The Mocking-Bird sat long, wondering which she had most done, given or taken? The trouble was that both equally hurt. He pondered it gloomily until a black-cassocked father stepped out of the church, blinking in the sudden glare. As he stood there, smiling at the picture made by the young man and the dog, Blythe hailed him, taking a gold piece from his pocket.

"Father, I wish to burn a candle in the church. Is this enough?"

"It will buy the largest candle that we have." The priest nodded with a curious glance. "Come."

He led the way back into the Mission, with its fragrance of lingering incense, the frescoes, painted by Indian converts a century ago, looming gaudily out of the dusk. The candle was huge, a veritable column of yellow wax. As he lit it, the Mocking-Bird's face glowed with satisfaction.

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"We're doing it in style, Jimmie, old scout," he muttered. "The same as you'd have done it for me."

"You burn this in memory?" the priest asked.

"A friend, killed right by my side. We had made a pact that, if only one of us came back, whoever it was would come here and burn a candle to the other."

"You are Catholics?"

"No, but we loved the old Mission."

Blythe turned to the father in sudden hope. "His name was Jimmie Wyle and he lived in Todos Santos. But I can find no trace of his people. Do you know of them?"

The priest reflected, then shook his head. "I know of no such name. You wish prayers said for his soul?"

"Jimmy needs no prayers, Father," Blythe answered.

Above its shaft of wax the candle-flame gleamed steadily, behind it from over the shadowy gold and purple of the altar a sanctus lamp cast a red glow upward on a face that seemed to hover in the dimness with an eternal serenity.

Blythe's voice took on a softer tone as he continued: "The cleanest, straightest chap the Lord ever put breath into, that was Jimmy Wyle. Gentle as a girl, he hated fighting; but when he did start in—oh, boy——"

Blythe's half-whisper died away, seeming to float up into the vault above the face; the father's hand fell upon his shoulder.

"That was a prayer in itself. Come now, you are not of our church, but confession is good."

"Oh, I'll confess," Blythe answered. He spread his hands with an effect of alarming admissions. "I admit it all—*mea culpa*."

Then came a grin that made him once more The Mocking-Bird.

"But honestly, Father, I can't seem to care a darn."

"I would some of my penitents were like you," the father mused with an answering twinkle. "Such soul agonies over such little bags of sins—hardly enough to make an angel hold its nose. I'll shrive you, my son, for you have at least loved."

MUCH later Blythe went down to Todos Santos, the puppy at his heels. He nodded in grim amusement as he looked down at the little beast. That girl had thought she had put something over on him, but for a resourceful young man it should be easy to find out who was the niece of a general—even a political one—and the mistress of the Los Palos Rancho.

He sought the bustle of Mission Street, with its huge caravanseries, its rows of specialty "shoppes" for the fleecing of winter tourists, its range of deliberately tropical palms to assure them that the chills of winter were quite unusual. In half an hour he had the information he desired, and, having treated himself to a bed and a bath in the little French hotel, he lay upon his pillows looking down into a garden where the gold of late oranges mingled with crimson pomegranates.

"Miss Claire Maynard," he remarked in satisfaction. "And she lives with her aunts at Overcliff out in Monte Vista. I'll send her that check."

Then he wrinkled his forehead at the certainty that to send a check simply meant that she would tear it up. He must take her the actual cash and be off again before she could return it.

He counted his purse; thirty dollars out of it would leave him strapped until he reached Los Angeles. He would have to hoof it back there, over the mountains again. But that would be a fitting finish to this little pilgrimage, and Monte Vista lay on his way.

"Bones—" he addressed the puppy. "we've got to change our habits, you and I."

He lit a pipe and lay long, looking down into the sunny peace of that garden.

"That girl has done me good, after all, with her proud ways. Why should she be civil to such as I? This Mocking-Bird stuff is all very well when you are young, but I am twenty-five. What will I be in ten years, Bones, if we keep it up?"

"There is Billy Weston," he considered. "He wrote me to join him up in the Cactus Patch down below Bakersfield. Something going to be doing there in oil, and I know that country like a book. We'll start at sundown, Bones. Until then we'll sleep. I feel lucky somehow."

III

IN THE walled seclusion of Overcliff, a conscientiously Spanish-style mansion hung between mountain and sea, Miss Claire Maynard was surprised that evening by a letter.

"A young man left it, Miss," the servant said, in answer to her glance of inquiry. "Quite a rough-looking young man—but he had a way with him. No answer, Miss, he said."

She knew what it was even before the folded bills fell out into her lap. Blythe had been much with her all day, in some way that annoyed her because she could not explain it. In the privacy of her room she had stormed at him, then at herself for having recognized such a raffish young person. Then again at herself for having been a "snip," whatever that might be.

She settled down to read, but jumped up suddenly in a furious desire to have that young man right there that she might hurt him—hurt him; then she chilled in a fear that possibly something might have already happened to hurt him. One never knew—such accidents happen to people.

She cried at that, rode down to the beach for a swim, and at dinner was unusually sweet to her visiting uncle and resident aunts.

Now as she looked down at the money and the coolly courteous little line of explanation accompanying it, she was—she didn't know what she was. There was so much of it, all different and all at once. In one whizzing instant she had decided that she would accept young Gillespie the very next time he proposed—he was at least a gentleman even if he was stout. As to the money, she would send it to the Red Cross and wipe that young man utterly from her mind.

In proof of that, before ever the maid could close the door, Claire was across the room and at her side.

"Which way did he go?"

"Across the lawn, Miss, to the trail gate—quite as if he knew about it."

It was anger that sped her feet now. How dare he, when she had given him the dog—flung it at his feet as she would a bone to the puppy. It was strange that he knew the gate, for it gave to nothing but the trail, and the existence of that short cut across the mountains had been a secret known only to her brother, herself and a few intimates. That was another insult on Blythe's part, for since her brother's death no one had walked that trail which he had cut.

The path was stony and her slippers thin. The moon was up now, hanging round and yellow above a purpling shoulder of the mountain. In the half-light a palpable hush lay over land and sea, and through its silence came the sound of some one whistling. He must have stopped to rest, for none could whistle like that and climb the trail at the same time.

Strong, round and mellow, the notes went up; the "Shadow Song," flawless and brilliant as a Galli-Curci record. Then the "Long, Long Trail," with all its flagrant sentiment transposed to a minor that tore at one's heart-strings. After that "The Mocking-Bird," and in its interpolations, instead of meaningless trills, came a gush of sheer melody, spurting upward like a silver fountain, falling only to rise again; a perfect rendition of that "falling song" of the male mocker that it is the fortune of so few ears ever to hear.

Claire listened, pressing back into the shadows, heedless of her evening gown against the clutching manzanitas. As he finished, there came, like a cold hand upon her heart, a constriction of surmise. Slowly she stole back again to the gate, across the dew-drenched lawn and up to her own room. It was a letter that she was seeking, a letter of a few damp, splotched, penciled pages, laid away in her most sacred hiding-place.

"*—they call him 'The Mocking-Bird' because he whistles so and always that song. The best pal a fellow ever had, and there are some good ones here, too. He doesn't know who I am. I am saving your face, you see, being such a stickler for rank you shall not be disgraced by a brother a mere doughboy. Besides I am keeping it as a surprise for him when I bring him home with me. Great times we'll have at Los Palos and climbing the private trail together—I have told him of that, and the cabin, too.*

"*And if I have to go west, all I ask is that he be by my side—it will be easier that way.*"

She sat on and on, the pages dancing in her tears, her limbs cramping with chill. In the gardens below the real mocking-birds awoke and piped their brief midnight song; but not until the land breeze heralded the invisible dawn did she stir.

"He—if it is he—will have gone to the cabin. I can ride there in an hour."

THE sky was graying when she reached the cabin, steel gray flushed with rose about the edges. Against it the peaks rose stark and purple, flat in the half-light as pasteboard silhouettes; pines, boulders and a brawling thread of a stream before a tightly shuttered cabin; and on a bed of pine-needles The Mocking-Bird was still asleep, a stretch of gray blanket and a sort of chrysanthemum of tumbled hair, the puppy curled in the small of his back.

Claire sat down to wait until he should wake. Up there the air was cool, intensely dry, clear as an amethyst crystal; but far below them the fog had drifted in, hiding

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sea and lower lands beneath a floor of tumbled white. They seemed alone in a world of their own, hung high between cloud and sky. That isolation brought a sense of intimacy with it, and she pondered the sleeping man.

There was such a sense of protection in watching over him as he lay stretched out in that unconsciousness. The most trivial personalities about him seemed fraught with importance; the rise and fall of the blanket with his steady breathing, the thinness of the ear above its edge. She felt a ridiculous desire to stroke his hair into some semblance of tidiness; surely his arm must be numb, using it like that for a pillow.

THE puppy woke, yawned, crawled upward and nuzzled at that ear; then seeing her, it straddled and barked in absurd defiance of her as a possible enemy. Blythe woke at the sound and shot out a hand to grab the puppy's collar.

"Steady on, Bones! What is it—a wildcat? You'll only get clawed—oh——"

He saw and sat up, kicking off the blanket, rubbing the sleep from his eyes.

"Miss Maynard!"

"I followed you here," she said steadily. "I must talk with you."

"Give me a moment to wake," he begged.

"There is a pool large enough to swim in a little way down the cañon."

He rose and stumbled down the trail, still half veiled in sleep. In a surprisingly short time he was back again, newly shaven and wide awake, the cold sting of the water palpably in his atmosphere.

"Am I again a trespasser on your lands?" he asked.

"As far as the place goes, you are my guest," she smiled. "But as far as breakfast goes, I must be yours."

He accepted her cue of quiet friendliness, balancing his little coffee-pot between two stones, kindling beneath it a tiny fire of twigs that burned without smoke. She liked his skill in that and she liked his concentration on his task, whistling as he worked and with only an occasional sentence, as though for them both to be there were the most normal thing in the universe.

Behind her own replies she was thinking: "And I thought he detested me. He has reason to, but he doesn't—he doesn't."

Black coffee, oatmeal crackers, with ripe figs green and purple on a platter of leaves. She liked the clean austerity of his camping fare; it matched something in himself, something that she was just beginning to see. As they ate, the sun leaped up from behind the ridge, sending a shaft of hot arrows down upon them, and the world turned blue and golden.

He had already lit an after-breakfast cigaret and was waiting for her to begin.

"Have you any other name by which you are known?" she asked at length.

"There are more who know me as 'The Mocking-Bird' than as Paul Blythe," he nodded.

"And that first day I met you at Los Palos, you spoke of having recently lost a friend."

"I did."

He was not going to help her, she saw. His confidences were held on high and to gain them was like climbing up that trail, a matter of steadfastness and endurance.

"May I ask his name?"

"He was known as Jimmy Wyle."

She was silent at that, sitting long with bowed head. He had an odd notion that this again was a confessional and that this time it was she, despite her questioning, who was the penitent.

"You say that he was 'known' by that name."

"I always knew that there was something that he was holding back. He would have told me—at the last—but the time was short. Besides—there were other things to say."

She rose wearily.

"Would you come back with me to Overcliff and see my uncle? There are things which must be told you, but it is not my place to say them."

He brought the pony and she prepared to mount; then she paused and spoke again.

"Yesterday, when you saw me with that puppy, you said that you were sorry for anybody—for any creature—who might be at my mercy."

He faced her steadily, with no effort at a falsely courteous recantation. Since she was asking the question she should have her answer.

"I did."

"May I ask what you meant by it?"

"You struck me, at that moment, as a woman without understanding; a woman who would destroy—with the best intentions, of course, but none the less destroy—where she could not rule."

He thought she was going to faint, she had turned so white, supporting herself by a hand on the pony's neck.

"It is not that—not really. It is simply that I want to help. I wanted him to take the chance that was before him."

"You are speaking of the puppy?" Blythe smoothly asked, and his tone steadied her.

"No, I am speaking of a man. But I did not destroy him, for he took his own way. But I made it a bitter way, I am afraid. I could not understand his wanting to take his chances with the mob when he could have been put in a position of authority. I wanted him to take his chance to be great."

"You wanted him to do what you wanted him to do, and you wanted him to be great according to your ideas of greatness; the woman's idea, that can see no greatness except when accredited by banners and drums."

"I—I loved him so," she faltered.

SO that was it, Blythe thought. This was the secret that Jimmy had never shared with him—that the girl he loved had failed of understanding. His eyes were merciless as he faced her. It hurt him horribly that they should be so, but he knew that back of his lack of mercy lay the real kindness. He saw that she must bleed and he turned the knife in the wound with the tender mercilessness of a surgeon.

"You loved him, but again according to your own ideas of things. You saw in him something you could push to the top to feed your own vanity. Had you really loved him, you would have nourished that which was really the greatest thing in him, instead of seeking to destroy it."

Her hurt was bitter, and it brought anger with it; she had too much spirit to submit tamely, even to what she saw was largely truth.

"You seem to know a great deal about love," she blazed at him.

"I do," he quietly replied. "Now, if you want me at Overcliff, let us go."

She could not understand why she submitted to being hoisted into the saddle so obediently, nor why she let him go swinging ahead of her down the trail. Her mind was a seethe of hurt, but gradually, as though his words had been some precipitating acid, it cleared. She seemed to be looking through a crystal straight down into her own heart, and what she saw affrighted her. Anger came again at that, waves of it beating at his unresponsive back, but they slid from his shoulders like waves from a smooth rock. Then they subsided and she contemplated his lithe young strength with a sense of rest.

AT Overcliff there was a library, shadowy and restful. In it sat the political general, rather human when one knew him, waving aside his title with a testy "Rubbish!—my niece's nonsense! I am Mister Clelland."

There were questions to be asked and answered, but most astonishing of all was a photograph. Claire Maynard, at about sixteen, and behind her a boy of perhaps a year younger, who was evidently her brother, yet as evidently Jimmy Wyle as well. The likeness between them at that age had been plain, and Blythe wondered that he had not caught the resemblance long before this. The uncle was speaking, in a dry, unemotional way, tapping out his sentences with the aid of his dangling glasses.

"I could so easily have obtained a commission for my nephew. Both myself and his sister were much disappointed that he preferred to take his chances with the general herd. We thought it argued a lack of spirit in him, but he seemed to think he was more fitted to follow than to lead. Then, without telling us, he enlisted under his first names of James Wyle."

There were aunts in the background, vaguely gracious to "dear Jimmy's friend," but evidently without the slightest understanding of the affair, or of any other, for that matter. Across the room was the girl, sitting straight and still as the uncle went on.

"We looked for you, as my nephew's friend, but we knew only your nickname and the War Department takes no cognizance of those. We had decided—my nephew left no will—but as a memorial to your association it seemed——"

Blythe had hardly heard, busy with his own thoughts. Now he was suddenly aware that the uncle had stopped, that the aunts were beaming in a sort of pale benevolence, which he found intensely irritating. Into the girl's eyes, as she looked at him, there had crept again that expression of superiority, all the more cutting because of some keenness of disappointment that accompanied it as he remained silent.

He came out of his daze and spoke. "Excuse me, do I understand that you are offering me money?"

"As I said, my niece considered that—as a sort of memorial to my nephew—you having been his closest friend during those trying days—and—er——"

Blythe rose and it was as though he had suddenly been coated with a transparent glaze of ice.

"I shall be glad indeed to accept a

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memorial of him," he smiled, "if you have another photograph of him." He laid the one he was holding back on the table. "One more recent—and taken alone—I should treasure it. I will send you my address, sir, and perhaps you will be kind enough to send it to me."

The ice broke as he continued, and through it came a spurt of which it could hardly be said whether it was the highest heat or the ultimate zero.

"And perhaps you will also inform Miss Maynard for me that there are some memories that are not for sale."

He was going, his eyes black with fury, walking blindly, but straight to that trail gate. It was under an oak-tree that she overtook him, breathless, shaken, but dewy fresh as a morning after rain.

"Please—please wait. That was a mistake—that last. We talked it over, but that was before ever I knew you. I had forgotten it and I forgot to tell Uncle, poor dear—he didn't understand, you know, he doesn't even now——"

"But you thought that I was going to take it," he accused, remembering her look during his pause of astonishment.

"I was—afraid," she murmured.

He advanced toward her almost threateningly.

"Then you will kindly, and at once, get over being afraid of that kind of thing with me. If ever I catch you——"

HE STOPPED, almost aghast. He was actually bullying a young lady in her own gardens, and the strangest thing of all was that she seemed to find nothing strange about it.

"I know—and I beg your pardon," she pleaded. "But——"

"There are no 'buts' about me," he finished for her.

She looked up at him and again came that fear of him; a sort of sheer panic, as at the approach of something stronger than herself, stronger even than her own fear of it.

All about them the sun was bursting through the lingering wisps of fog; overhead climbing roses flashed their crimson fire along the boughs of the oaks, a mocking-bird struck up his morning song—sun, warmth and peace, a feeling as if forces mightier than themselves were sweeping them along in a current of sheer delight.

"The Los Palos Rancho," she was saying. "We really do want a manager there, and if you only would take it——"

She was swaying a little toward him, her hands clasped in pleading. A pretty trick, used unconsciously, but one which she had always relied on. Then he became cool and wary as a little voice deep down in him seemed to whisper:

"Look out—look out! She'll get you yet on her own terms."

Claire listened, heedless of her gown against the clutching manzanitas.

The manager of her ranch, and she with that prideful droop still lurking at the corners of her mouth, ready to creep out over her lips. He thought swiftly of Billy Weston and the Cactus Patch, and that inner voice whispered again:

"Not yet—but soon."

She must be baffled and defeated, then swept off her feet, then made to wait again. It was again The Mocking-Bird who answered her, gay, defiant, heartrendingly the master of his affairs.

"You can't give up hope of ruling me, can you?" he asked, then he bent, swept her into his arms and boldly kissed the lips she strove to withhold. "There—another blow for your pride."

He strode to the gate, whistling to the puppy, and after him came her voice.

"I detest you."

"That's a good beginning," he called airily back. "Keep it up—just as long as ever you can."

"I will never, never see you again!"

"That is something for me to decide, not you."

He was gone now, striding up the trail again, and within him that voice spoke again its refrain of "Not yet—too soon—too soon—but later on——"

Far up the trail he stopped and looked down at the puppy.

"Bones," he remarked, in amused illumination, "you can't beat a woman. I am doing just exactly what she really wants, after all."

Beginning with "Merely Married" in the November number, EVERYBODY'S will publish a series of six short stories, each complete in one issue, by Nalbro Bartley, author of "A Woman's Woman," "The Gorgeous Girl," "Careless Daughters," etc.

These stories, told with the delightfully humorous twist that distinguishes Miss Bartley's best work, have to do with contemporary incidents in the lives of the new rich and the new poor. One central figure connects the series—an old-fashioned country doctor who makes his calls in a top buggy behind a horse named *Home Rule*, and who is invariably accompanied by a faithful dog answering to the equally extraordinary name of *Dammit*.

Together this odd trio make their rounds amid the rapidly changing small town life that is faithfully reflected in a half-dozen of its most interesting phases.

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Bound to the Westward

By Ralph D. Paine

Here's a story with all the vigor and strain of the sea in it. The story of a race in which money, pride and revenge are some of the stakes, and two of those glorious, almost-vanished six-masters the contestants. If you like a sea-story you'll like this, and look forward to those others we're going to print from time to time.

ONCE more the ships of all the world were crowded together in the great docks and basins of Antwerp or moored for miles along the quay, so swiftly had this indomitable seaport aroused itself after the blight and the bondage of war. In the background of this pageant of spray-stained funnels and high-sided cargo boats, beyond the forest of derrick-booms and stays, soared in a kind of austere beauty the lofty spars of two American schooners, both of them six-masted. Larger than any of the sailing ships that lifted skysail yards in the noble days of the clipper trade, the age of steam had been unable to banish them from blue water. Hailing from the same home port of Bath, flying the same house flag, these two titanic schooners had wandered on courses separate and remote to meet in the ancient haven of the Scheldt.

Captain Marlin Curtis of the *Jane Wetherell* came out of the spacious cabin and paused, before going ashore, to cast an eye on deck and aloft. He seemed very young for such a command as this, but if reminded of it he was apt to tell you, with his bright, boyish smile, that his granddad had a fine East Indiaman when he was twenty-one.

Times had changed since then, but it was still in the blood of a Curtis to follow the sea and forge ahead on his merits. He also exemplified the fact, strange to many landlubbers, that a mariner can be a gentleman, mindful of his manners and particular about his clothes. In a word, when this Captain Marlin Curtis was ready for a stroll and dinner in Antwerp he might have been mistaken for a taut, energetic young business man not long out of college. His earnings, indeed, were much handsomer than most of them can boast of.

An autumn sunset turned the gleaming ribbon of river to gold. The longshoremen trooped homeward and sailors were singing upon the forecastle-heads of other ships. Cabin windows began to show cheery patches of light in the shadowy basins. The sound of the cathedral chimes came clear and sweet across the lowlands, and the tinkling music of ships' bells proclaimed the hour from a hundred decks.

All about the *Jane Wetherell* were acres of canal-boats and barges whose drowsy destiny it was to float away to Holland, to the Rhine, to the fields and towns of France. They constituted a populous village of buxom, white-capped women, slow-spoken Flemish skippers, and tow-headed children who scampered from one boat to another.

Marlin Curtis waved a hand in greeting and a score of urchins replied in shrill, delighted chorus. He was the fairy godfather from across the sea who gave them pennies and sweetmeats. His attention was diverted by a sudden uproar at the other end of his ship. The noise of it smote the peaceful scene like an explosion. Running forward, he found the crew of Norfolk niggers clustered on the starboard side while they gazed up at the rigging and yelled wild applause and laughter. There descended to them one stentorian voice in accents indignant and profane. Above it all rose the bark of a dog immensely in earnest.

The puzzled master of the vessel looked up toward the cross-trees and discerned, flattened against the shrouds, a black blob of a figure which appeared to have roosted there for the night. Whenever it moved, the aggrieved Airedale was stirred to a very frenzy of emotion. In response to a question, a lanky yellow seaman slouched over to explain:

"Yes, suh, Cap'n. That Scotty dawg has suttinly done treed a coon. Who-all it is up yondah, suh, spraddled out like a bug? 'Splay-foot' Simmons, th' tall-complected man in th' mate's watch. He ain't got no mo' sense than to pick a fuss wid Scotty."

CAPTAIN CURTIS whistled, but the dog paid no heed, having rushed to the port bulwark on the chance that his quarry might try to clamber down that side.

"What did Simmons do to him? Scotty enjoys visiting the fo'castle and this is the first ruction. I'll keep him aft if he is a nuisance."

"Not a-tall, please, suh, Cap'n," protested the informant. "We jes' dotes on this yere hairydale dawg. Simmons was a pesterin' him las' voyage, an' Scotty he ain't gwine to be put upon by nobody. Mebbe you done notice, suh, that Simmons works in his bare feet 'cause th' bigges' shoes in th' world is bound to hurt him. He's one o' them long-heel Georgia niggers, Cap'n, what is liable to step on hisself behind. Well, Scotty he's got mo' brains than mos' white men, an' he figgers he kin worry Simmons some by nibblin' at his heels."

"Bite him, did he?" impatiently exclaimed the skipper. "I can't let the dog chew my sailors. What's the rest of it?"

"He didn't bite, suh. Bless yo' heart, them heels o' Simmons 'ud scuff splinters outen a plank. Scotty jes' sharpened his teeth on 'em. Simmons got right mad this evenin' an' reckoned he'd bounce a chunk o' coal off Scotty. It kinder grazed th' dawg an' he 'lowed he'd git even by makin' Simmons spend th' night up among th' stars. Umm-m, boss, that Georgia nigger flew on high. He didn't touch nothin' till he lit."

The other sailors had drifted near to listen to the dialog. The commotion had subsided. There were unctuous chuckles or uneasy whispers. The captain rarely left his realm of the quarterdeck. They feared a scolding, but he knew how to deal with these simple children of the sea. He looked about him for the mate, and a roly-poly seaman, so black that in the dusk he was all white teeth and eyeballs, gathered courage to say:

"Mistah Kent jes' stepped aboa'd a canal-boat fo' a minute till you was ready to go asho', suh. He is payin' his respects to a lady fren' what hails from Amsterdam."

"Let Mr. Kent's affairs alone and mind how you behave yourselves, boys," admonished Captain Curtis. "What's the idea? Does Simmons deserve to be kept aloft for a while? I want to take Scotty with me, but I'll let you be the jury."

"We-all 'ud like to leave him treed till sun-up, please, suh," came a voice from the crowd, "but it'll be a terrible disapp'intment to Scotty if he can't go ramblin' round th' big town wid you. What you say, men?"

"Simmons so scared now his skin is bleachin'," replied the lanky darkey. "Hand him a suspended sentence same as th' jedge did to me las' trip in Norfolk, an' let Scotty enjoy hisself this evenin'."

The verdict was approved and Captain Marlin Curtis called sharply to the absorbed Airedale, who now sat with ears cocked and eyes intent on the unhappy seaman in the rigging. Instead of barking furiously, he emitted occasional yelps which were so many insulting epithets. At his master's summons the stump of a tail wagged eloquently and the yelp had a wistful note, but duty was foremost to a proper sea-dog and the obvious task in hand was to keep Simmons up a tree. A command more emphatic and Scotty, with a bitter farewell, trotted reluctantly to the gangway and followed the captain.

THEY passed along the wharf, from which the dog made several sallies to scamper over the huddled canal-boats. The children were his friends, as was made manifest by the squeals of welcome, but the dogs of various breeds who dwelt in this floating village might have been seen to vanish into cabins and hatchways. They tarried not to renew discussions which had proved both painful and futile. It was Scotty's custom to patrol this territory at least twice daily and smother any sparks of canine rebellion. Alertly he rejoined his lord and soon forgot the affair of "Splay-foot" Simmons, for the smells and sights of Antwerp were entrancing and demanded incessant investigation. It was the mood

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Captain Marlin Curtis came out of the spacious cabin and paused . . . .

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of the sailor ashore, a respite from the lonely monotony of the sea.

Captain Marlin Curtis sauntered along the stone terraces of the *promenoirs* where Antwerp loiters in its leisure hours to watch the laden ships steam outward bound to the River Plate, to the Straits Settlements or the shining harbors of the Caribbean. Women turned to look at him, and some of them were charming; but he passed unheeding, for his heart was elsewhere and a sweetheart was waiting at the end of the long road home.

He turned into medieval streets of tall façades and ornate buildings and saw the lights gleam on little basins, tucked away in the heart of the town, which had sheltered the high-pooped argosies that fetched the silks from the Indies, and the silver from the New World three centuries ago. The place he sought was a Flemish inn, low-roofed and incredibly old, which was a favorite haunt of shipmasters.

A dozen of them were dining there when Curtis entered, bronzed, sedate men of middle age from British tramps, Norwegian wind-jammers, and the new American steamers of the Shipping Board fleet. He found a vacant table in a corner and idly listened to the talk of ships and ports and charters, while Scotty paid his dignified respects to each skipper in turn and received a pat or a friendly word.

They were his social equals, as his demeanor plainly indicated. Toward second mates and grades below that he was inclined to be a bit offish, if not condescending. Satisfied that all present were eligible to his set, he found a place on the sanded floor beside his captain's chair and fixed his serious gaze on the door as though in duty bound to inspect any further visitors.

MARTIN CURTIS was making headway with an excellent dinner when a burly, wind-reddened man came in from the tap-room and halted to look for acquaintances. His gait was the least trifle unsteady and the big voice was excessively jovial as he spoke to this shipmaster and that, but they made no effort to detain him at their tables. The attentive Scotty recognized him as Captain Jim Edgerly of the *Henry Dearborn*, the other Yankee six-master in port, but was evidently resolved to be no more cordial than strict courtesy required. The sinews stiffened beneath the Airedale's rough coat and the lip lifted an instant to show a glint of white fangs. Otherwise he dissembled his feelings like the thoroughbred that he was.

Advancing to the table in the corner, Captain Edgerly dropped into the empty chair facing Marlin Curtis and heartily exclaimed: "Hello, son, how's the old schooner? Is the ballast coming aboard any faster? I'll sail my coal-wagon home empty if I have to wait much longer."

Young Curtis glanced up from a copy of *Lloyd's Weekly* to say in his affable way:

"I've got a first-rate crew, Jim, and they have turned to in bully style to help move me out of here. I hope to clear in a few days. It's all right to go empty coastwise in one of these big vessels, but not for me in a November passage to the west'ard."

The older skipper's visage flushed with a sudden truculence and his voice was louder as he replied: "Trying to tell me how to handle a vessel? You make me laugh. I was a sailor when you were suckin' a bottle."

The outburst was so unprovoked that Marlin Curtis tried to ignore it, but he could not help the quiet retort:

"Anyhow, Jim, I let the bottle alone after that. You ought to be feeling pretty cheerful—the last leg of a lucky voyage, freights sky-high, and a wad of money due you in primage. I didn't get in on that Rio charter."

It was apparent that the master of the *Henry Dearborn* was in a surly humor. The brighter side of life meant nothing to him. With a scowl, he grumbled:

"About time I had a good run, wasn't it? Seems to me you were skimming the cream of it last year. Don't mention luck to me. To trust a kid like you with a walloper of a vessel like the *Jane Wetherell* is crowding luck to the limit."

MARTIN CURTIS had never found him so deliberately exasperating as this. It was like a turbid stream breaking over its banks. Jealousy was the motive. He envied Curtis for his youth, his success, his education, for the high esteem in which he was held at home. It was the unconscious confesson of a man embittered by his own faults and failures and growing too old to redeem them, a spendthrift and a toper who had been set ashore until the scarcity of skippers recalled him to the sea. The candid vision of young Curtis read his mind and was ready with extenuation.

"Order something to eat, Jim. You need a little ballast yourself. You are dining with me. And I'll take you to a show. This is a celebration. There will be a wedding as soon as I moor in Portland. I received a cable from her to-day."

"The Nickerson girl, I suppose," said Captain Edgerly, in milder tones. "Fine people. High-toned stock. What are you going to do with her? She won't want to live aboard a vessel."

"It's my last trip in the old hooker," Marlin Curtis informed him, with a shade of regret. "There's no seamanship in steam, but even the big schooners have had their day and I'm going to shift. I can afford to work up, even if it means a setback for a while. It will give me short voyages and a chance to get home."

"Your last run in the *Jane Wetherell*, eh?" growled the other, veering to his former mood. "Not good enough for you? Aim to be the brass-buttoned, dandy master of a steam kettle? By God, I'll give you a chance to show your seamanship. Any bantam can crow, but that don't prove he can stand the gaff."

"You are a fine seaman, Jim. We won't argue that," smiled Curtis. "Name your proposition."

"I'll race your vessel home, to Portland lightship, for all the money you've got the sand to put up;" and the heavy voice was derisive.

"For big stakes?" queried Curtis. "Nothing doing. I need that money to get started in a new career. It really belongs to *her*, don't you see? It wouldn't be a square deal."

Captain Edgerly laughed. It was a taunt which youth, eager and sensitive, could not easily withstand, but the hard school of the sea had taught Marlin Curtis to master himself. He was silent while the other man drained a mug of ale and wiped his grizzled mustache with the back of his hand. Meanwhile an Airedale dog, wise and curious, had remained beside the table. The mere presence of Captain Edgerly had disquieted him, but etiquette forebade expression. It was different, however, when the boorish guest began to talk, and the hostile intonations rasped Scotty's acute nerves beyond endurance. He had suspected that this was an impossible person and now he knew it.

No longer sprawled in comfort, he had stood regarding his adored Captain Curtis, his eyes shining like jewels through the whorls of hair, in mute appeal for permission to take an active part in the business. His posture was stiff and tense. He stalked close to the chair of Captain Jim Edgerly and sniffed that objectionable mariner.

The intention of Scotty was to convey contempt. Language could have been no more explicit. This attention annoyed the skipper, who had been drinking heavily enough to be easily startled. He stirred in his chair and shoved the dog away. Scotty's restraint was perfect until that ugly, taunting laugh which seared his soul like a hot iron. He growled a threat and bared his teeth to the bone.

At the unpleasant sound, Captain Edgerly jumped up and let drive with a savage kick which smote the dog on the head. He dropped as though shot and lay quivering. Marlin Curtis was stooping over him when two seafarers from the next table intervened to keep the men apart. Presently Scotty achieved a feeble wriggle or two, rolled over, struggled to his feet and stood swaying. Inch by inch he dragged himself straight toward the enemy who had so brutally used him. The impending clash was forgotten while the tavern room was stilled and the company watched the tenacious endeavor of a dog whose courage was unbreakable. Curtis spoke to him and Scotty remembered that he was in honor bound to conduct himself as a gentleman. With a whimper of affection, not of surrender, he crawled upon the overcoat which his master folded as a bed for him.

SOBERED by the disapproval of his fellow shipmasters, and perhaps ashamed, Captain Jim Edgerly stood glowering at them, a brawny figure of a man toughened by many a rough-and-tumble fight afloat and ashore. Marlin Curtis, a stripling beside him, was too clear-headed to incite a brawl in which he was sure to be mercilessly battered, but his anger was no less consuming. His boyish color had paled and his voice was hard as he said to Captain Edgerly:

"You kicked my dog, you big, cowardly rough-neck! And you'd kick me if you had me down. I know your breed. Yes, I'll race my vessel against yours, and I'll break you. I know what you've cleaned up, because you had no chance to spend it. The money's on the owner's books. Five thousand a side it is, and you'll sign your name before these witnesses."

Jim Edgerly stared in dumb bewilderment. His noisy bluff was called, with a vengeance. Five thousand dollars was a shrewd guess. It was his first slant of good fortune in many years, an anchor to windward against the day when he should be adrift again. His gaze roved about the room and found not one friendly face. An English master mariner said softly to a neighbor:

"What a rotter! The youngster has spilled the wind out of *his* sails."

Captain Edgerly winced at this condemnation. He rubbed his chain with fingers that trembled a little while he tried to pull

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himself together. The aspect of Marlin Curtis, challenging, dominant, compelled him to reply, with awkward hesitation:

"I'm sorry I hurt the dog. He riled me, I guess, and I was too sudden with him. Accept an apology, won't you? About that race to the west'ard, it was more or less in fun—the big stakes—and you told me you couldn't afford it——"

"Never mind about that," Curtis crisply broke in. "You'll sign the agreement right now and it will be mailed to the managing owner to-morrow."

Other duels, in days gone by, had been arranged across the wine-stained tables of this old Flemish inn. Customs change, but human nature is constant. His mind less befogged, Captain Edgerly realized that to evade this issue would make him a mark for ridicule in every port where sailormen foregathered. He had faith in his ship, but could he himself endure the strain of such a contest without breaking? It was Youth, clean and splendid and unmarred, against which he was compelled to match himself. With nothing more to say, he stood apart while the other shipmasters, a dignified body of umpires, discussed the terms and details. The landlord brought pen and paper. Captain Edgerly sullenly scrawled his signature. Then the oldest master, gray and portly, lifted his glass to Captain Marlin Curtis and rolled out the catch:

"But the standing toast that pleased the most
Was—The wind that blows, the ship that goes,
And the lass that loves a sailor."

FOUR days later an Airedale dog barked a fare-ye-well from the poop of the *Jane Wetherell* and forgot his headache as the stately schooner floated out of the basin and swam in the wake of a tug absurdly small. The *Henry Dearborn* was also ready to clear, for the ballast had been pouring into her cavernous hold without cessation, night and day. Captain Marlin Curtis had said nothing about the tavern episode, but the gossiping cook picked up the tale ashore and elaborated it to the fo'castle. The dusky seamen were ready to wade through gore. They ceased to shiver with dread of the cruel westerly gales and the bitter cold of a winter passage in the North Atlantic. The skipper addressed them briefly, just before sailing.

"I've got a bet on, boys, that we can shove home faster than the *Dearborn*. If we do, there'll be a present of fifty dollars a man when the ship pays off in Portland. That's on me. I have tried to keep the vessel up, and she can stand the racket. She is trimmed to her marks and she ought to go. How about you?"

"Good Lawd, Cap'n, you don't have to tell us *nothin'*," grinned a brisk young sailor. "Extry money come in right handy—them Norfolk cullud gals is sure fond of fancy trimmin's, but yo' ain't obliged to give us nary cent. We gwine *win*, if we busts this ol' bucket wide open."

"Skipper of th' *Dearborn* tried his bes' to knock th' haid offen our Scotty dawg," exclaimed another, and this seemed to sum up the matter.

Young Captain Curtis had passed some profoundly unhappy hours. At twenty-four one's emotions ebb and flow in violent tides. It was reckless folly to risk what he had earned and saved to make his dreams come true, and yet he felt that the girl would understand. After all, the hazards of life were what made it worth while, and too much prudence was an old man's game. The first mate of the *Wetherell* disagreed with this doctrine and shook his head over this adventure of driving hell-bent to the west'ard. A dour downcaster who served with dogged fidelity, he was always hoping to quit the sea and "run a tidy little hen farm." His manner suggested that Captain Curtis had made a blazing fool of himself.

THE *Jane Wetherell* dropped down the river between the dikes and windmills, and the breeze from the North Sea hummed through her stays. To the rattle of the steam winches the immense lower sails began to climb the masts, while a few men moved on deck. It was amazing to see a great sailing ship clothe herself with canvas in this quiet and simple way. Soon the hawser was cast off and the tug tooted good-by. The schooner slid gently through a sad and misty sea while, one by one, the topsails unfolded and soared taut, a hundred and fifty feet in air. The discipline of a smart ship displayed itself in a vigilant and orderly routine.

Before nightfall the *Henry Dearborn* gleamed like a white tower a few miles astern as she stood out in chase. The wind died with the sun and the two vessels drifted within sight of each other when the darkness closed down in cloudy obscurity. It was dubious weather such as presages the sudden gales that furiously lash the North Sea. Before dawn the *Jane Wetherell* was buffeted by rain squalls which increased in violence. Close hauled, she plunged with sail reduced, while other ships around her groped on shrouded courses and the sirens of unseen steamers wailed their warnings.

The sodden dawn disclosed no sign of the *Henry Dearborn*. They had parted in the night to steer their separate ways to the open sea. Captain Marlin Curtis was still on deck in dripping oil-skins, after an unbroken vigil, but there was no weariness in his voice as he said to the mate:

"We're apt to get this dirty stuff all the way down Channel, Mr. Kent. How are the men taking it?"

"They refused to go below at all, the crazy niggers—just hunted for a dry spot and snoozed between watches. They'll be all wore out in a week."

"Not with that spirit in them," laughed the skipper. "It's bound to shove the old *Jane* along."

"One snoozer of a blow after another, that's what we're up against," grumbled the mate. "Well, I guess it won't make Jim Edgerly feel any too chipper. He's slack in some respects. His gear and canvas ain't in the shape ours is to stand the racket, and his crew was sulky when they left port. He damns 'em promiscuous. He'll be uglier than ever on this voyage."

"The two vessels ought to sail about alike. I gamble on beating *him*," was the captain's verdict, and he did not mean to boast.

A week later the big schooner had passed clear of reef and shoal and foreland and was reaching into the wide Atlantic. Head winds and battering seas had tested her endurance and the fidelity of those who so stubbornly drove her to the westward. They were wet and cold and haggard for sleep, yet always at the word the unwieldy sails were reefed or hauled or flattened home to the clamor of the steam winches and the banging of sheets and boom-tackles. Captain Curtis had lost a little of his care-free, boyish aspect and there was not so much noisy laughter in the forecastle. He slept in his clothes and seldom forsook the deck for more than a couple of hours.

The fatigue and anxiety left one member of the crew untouched. This was Scotty, the zealous Airedale, who dashed forward whenever the watches were changed and barked his summons to the men to rouse out and bear a hand. They swore that he knew a race was on, and the weather was never too heavy to keep him below. When a green sea broke over the bulwark and roared along the deck to wash the bedraggled Scotty into the scuppers, he floundered out, shook himself, and looked about for a sailor who might be loafing on the job. "Splay-foot" Simmons was wearing shoes by now, but he nervously moved at a gallop whenever the Airedale followed him to the rigging. It was generally agreed that the dog earned the pay of a boatswain and should be rated as such.

THERE came at length a fleeting spell of bright weather with a favoring wind that blew strongly over a blue sea carpeted with foam. The tension relaxed while the crew sprawled in the sunshine and let the *Jane Wetherell* sweep bravely along. At night Marlin Curtis appeared on deck every now and then, although the mates were competent to handle the ship. It was the compulsion of habit. Shortly before daylight he climbed out of his cabin for one of these uneasy promenades. He was prodigiously drowsy, like a man walking in his sleep.

At the sound of his step, Scotty jumped from his resting-place beside the bed and flitted after him up the companionway. They walked to and fro, the dog and his master, while the shadowy vessel lifted to the long swing of the seas. After all the days and nights of conflict it soothed the mind to feel her running free. Far forward the men on watch were singing in a rich, deep-throated harmony a refrain that was like an old chantey:

"Last hawser's cast an' th' tug whistle's blowin',
Shore growin' dim in th' mist an' th' rain:
Wide, very wide is th' world where we's goin',
Long, very long till you see us again."

Captain Marlin Curtis moved nearer to listen, and his thoughts had wandered far. As he came to the narrow stretch of quarterdeck between the cabin and the low rail, he stumbled over a ring-bolt. He was less alert than usual. Just then the schooner rolled far down, and he failed to recover himself. For an instant his fingers slid along the smooth surface of the rail and then he pitched forward, headlong, and there was nothing to grasp. It was incredibly stupid of him to fall overboard, he was saying to himself, but such was the fact. A toppling comber strangled his shout as he went under, and he was left swimming for his life in the frothing wake of the vessel. He had heard, while he was falling, the agonized yelp of Scotty and presently he fancied that he caught a faint whine of entreaty. It seemed to come from the surface of the sea.

Methodically kicking off his shoes and squirming out of his heavy reefer, Marlin Curtis wasted no strength in useless effort. The chill of the water benumbed

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The gossiping cook picked up the tale ashore and elaborated it to the fo'castle.

him and the waves broke over his head, but he had the strength and courage for a prolonged struggle. The ghostly loom of the schooner vanished in the night, but a red spark broke into flame astern of her and burned upon the heaving ocean. It conveyed a message of hope and rescue. The mate had been quick to release and fling a light-buoy and Curtis swam toward it with a steady stroke. Again he heard that pitiful whine and he knew that his dog had followed him. What else would you expect of Scotty, thought the castaway. Until death do us part was the only code he knew.

The flickering light-buoy threw an uncanny circle of illumination, and soon Curtis fancied he could see a dark dot slowly moving toward it. He heaved his shoulders clear of the water and shouted with all the breath he could muster. It was a yelp that came back from Scotty, weak but jubilant and undismayed. They met each other at the buoy, and Curtis clung to the big cork ring with one hand, while he supported the dog with the other. They floated and listened until the wind brought to their ears the thunder of canvas and blocks and the harsh uproar of the winches. The *Jane Wetherell* had been hove to and Mr. Kent was lowering a boat.

"Cheer up, shipmate," said Curtis to Scotty. "We may be water-logged, but you can't drown us."

The dog whimpered his affection and tried to scramble up on the buoy which rolled and turned and baffled his efforts. The flame of the chemical torch had begun to sputter and die, and the darkness was closing in on them. The youthful vigor of Marlin Curtis was ebbing. His muscles were cramped and he shifted the burden of the weary dog who was so manfully endeavoring to take care of himself. The sea was growing rougher. It ran in swollen billows which broke like white cataracts. More than once they buried the skipper and his dog, but they emerged and still held fast to the buoy. At last they beheld the intermittent gleam of a lantern in the bow of the yawl.

It was increasingly difficult for Marlin Curtis to prevent Scotty from being washed away from him. Help was almost at hand when a cruel sea smote them. It stamped them under, strove to drown them. When the yawl found the skipper, and the sailors dragged him over the gunwale, he was so nearly unconscious that he did not know that the dog had been wrenched from his grasp in this last struggle for survival. The boat searched in vain while the men yelled and whistled for their lost Scotty dawg. They fancied they heard him cry once or twice, but in the wind and the sea and the black night he was blotted out. Very sorrowfully they pulled back to the schooner, forgetting to give thanks for the live skipper. Still berating himself as a clumsy swab for falling overboard, Martin Curtis crawled into his bunk and slept ten hours on end, turning out little the worse for the misadventure.

IT WAS a different ship, however, with Scotty gone. The forecastle believed that the luck of the ship had vanished with him. Spirits drooped forlorn and the work lagged. "Splay-foot" Simmons, his grudge forgotten, said to the second mate as he shambled aft to take the wheel:

"That fool dawg made hisself mighty free with mah heels, but if he'd only come back he kin bite mah ear. He wuz suttinly th' bes' officer in this yere vessel. How we gwine beat th' ol' *Henry Dearborn* now?"

These emotional children of the sea were of the opinion that the race was lost. Loyalty to Captain Marlin Curtis constrained them to do their duty, but now it was merely a matter of getting the ship across the Western Ocean. At night when the sheaves whined in a block or a halyard creaked in the wind they heard the ghost of poor Scotty. He would soon forsake them, no doubt, and haunt the wicked ol' Cap'n Jim Edgerly, which was some small consolation. Marlin Curtis kept his sorrow to himself, but it was poignant and abiding. As a blundering, bandy-legged puppy, Scotty had been a gift from the girl at home.

There was no time for repining, however, for the *Jane Wetherell* lost her lucky weather and wrestled with boisterous head winds day after day. She thrashed through a week of it, and then came another respite, a glorious gale astern that shouted through the stays and made the topmasts bend like whips. The *Jane Wetherell* foamed at fourteen knots under a hard, blue sky, her soaring canvas strained to breaking, while Marlin Curtis smiled and told them to let her go.

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It was late in one of these brilliant afternoons when the look-out in the bow descried a lump of a steamer far distant ahead and very low on the water. He sang out and Captain Curtis picked his glasses off the cabin roof. Soon he said to Mr. Kent:

"Something wrong with that chap. Down by the head and crumpled up amidships like an old hat."

"Flying a distress signal, is she, sir?"

"Not that I can make out. Abandoned, I should say. Ease off a little, if you please, an' we'll take a look at her."

The schooner edged from her course and bowled toward the damaged steamer, which seemed about to plunge under. A few miles nearer and it was perceived that a collision had cut her almost in two. An uncouth, grimy little tramp which had seen hard service, by some miracle the rusty bulkheads aft had withstood the pressure of the sea and so she had floated. There were no signs of a crew aboard of her. One could imagine them madly piling into the boats before the steamer dropped out from under them.

"By rights she ought to have dove to Davy Jones in about six minutes," said Captain Curtis, the glasses at his eyes.

"Ships are like women," glumly observed Mr. Kent. "They don't behave the way you cal'late. Well, I guess we won't tarry to hold no obsequies. A bulkhead 'll go bang and she'll sink like a plummet."

"Very well, haul on your course again," said the skipper as he glanced aloft. The weight of the wind was formidable and dark clouds were banking in the west. Seamanship in a six-masted schooner is an art unto itself. The time to shorten sail is before your vessel runs away with you. The *Jane Wetherell* wallowed wildly as she fled, and the following seas threatened to pile over her stern. Marlin Curtis gazed once more at the derelict, expecting to see her vanish before his eyes. He jumped for the glasses, uttered a sharp exclamation, and stared as though he had forgotten the urgent stress of his own ship.

"There *is* something alive on that drowning hooker," he cried. "Ah, there it is again. See it, Mr. Kent, way aft, on the turtle-back? By George, those squareheads left their dog aboard when they abandoned ship."

THE word passed along the deck of the *Jane Wetherell*, and the seamen, open-mouthed, shaded their eyes with their hands. It was their judgment that any seafaring men who would leave their dog behind to die deserved to roast in hell for a million years. The cook said much more than this. Marlin Curtis heard fragments of their vehement discussion and he turned to two of his dusky hands who sweated at the wheel.

"Feel the same way, Aleck? How about you, Charlie?"

"Yes, suh, Cap'n, it is sure low-down an' ornery. Mebbe they kinder forgot th' dawg in th' 'citement. Mighty sad doin's, Cap'n, fo' us-all to go boomin' by."

"I think so myself," exclaimed young Captain Curtis. "We owe it to Scotty to pick up that pup yonder. We'll have to wear ship, Mr. Kent."

The mate was astonished and stood hesitant. He was never an impulsive man and his wits were slow.

"Wear ship?" he echoed. "With this gale o' wind behind us? We're liable to jump the sticks out of her. And we'll smash a boat if we try to board that derelict."

"Do you want me to call you a damn quitter?" replied the youthful shipmaster, with a flash of the temper which Captain Jim Edgerly had evoked in the old Flemish tavern. "I'm going to get that dog, understand?"

"It's your vessel, not mine," muttered the mate. "We won't get hove to and smugged down before dark. Aye, I'll do as I'm told."

"Obey orders if you break owners," cheerfully retorted the master of the *Jane Wetherell*. "You bet your boots this is my ship, so go to it."

THE task was bold and hazardous, to bring this great schooner around, with her staggering press of canvas, and a wind that heaped the sea in weltering hills and valleys. It was a nimble, eager crew, however, that waded through cascades of water on deck or swayed far out on the foot-ropes of the bowsprit. To them the errand was not in the least quixotic or sentimental. It was the most natural thing in the world, to risk losing an ocean race for the sake of a perishing dog. They toiled and dared and shouted while Captain Marlin Curtis handled the ship with the splendid skill and caution of a man fit to command. Watchfully he brought her through each critical stage until, without loss of spars or canvas, the *Jane Wetherell* pitched and rolled to leeward of the dying freight steamer.

The day was ended, but a rift in the clouds revealed a farewell, radiant glow. To the southward there appeared for a moment the sheen of a vessel's sails. Hull down and under though she was, Marlin Curtis was able to discern the six masts, and he knew that the *Henry Dearborn* was pelting along to the westward before this kindly gale, three hundred miles in twenty-four hours, as long as it should blow. Mr. Kent caught this same glimpse of the other schooner and he shook his head with an air melancholy beyond words. He could make certain allowances for youth, but this was too much.

"You're right about sending a boat away," the skipper told him. "It can't be done. I'll take your word for that. The sea will have to moderate. Perhaps we can try it later to-night."

"Wait here, do you mean? It may blow harder."

"Yes, wait until I get that dog off, or the steamer sinks," grimly answered the very young man.

"And lose five thousand dollars?" exclaimed the hard-headed mate. "I s'pose you noticed that Cap'n Jim Edgerly is slammin' to the west'ard to beat all hell."

"Well, Mr. Kent," said Marlin Curtis, in a frank burst of confidence, "I am an idiot in your eyes, but I'd rather lose five thousand dollars than to hate myself for the rest of my life. Did you ever feel that way?"

"I dunno, sir. I guess I have. When a man comes to my age, he can remember things that he wishes hadn't happened. Some of 'em hurt deep."

Before the winter twilight faded, they saw the dog still far aft on the derelict and they thought they heard his bark come down the wind. He expected them to stand by. This was quite evident to the sailors of the *Jane Wetherell*. It was almost certain that the stricken freighter would founder before morning, but even the hardened gamblers of the schooner's forecastle refused to bet on it. Through the night nobody knew whether or not the dog and his precarious refuge had been obliterated.

By daybreak the *Jane Wetherell* had drifted miles to leeward, and it was the work of hours to beat up to her station. The wreck of a steamer was still afloat. It defied all common sense. The way of a ship upon the sea is beyond all understanding. It was dangerous to launch a boat, but the seamen of the *Wetherell* could no longer be denied. The sea was a little smoother and they tumbled into the yawl as soon as the captain granted permission. Mr. Kent went in charge, still grumbling, but inwardly proud of the fact that he could handle a small boat better than any man in the ship.

They got clear of the schooner with whole skins and warily approached the derelict, which was swept by the seas like a half-tide rock. Captain Curtis saw them swing in close and then bend desperately at the oars to avoid being crushed. It looked as though they must give it up, but just then the waiting dog jumped from the shattered bulwark and plopped into a wave. A seaman deftly yanked him inboard and the others cheered frantically. Even the stolid Mr. Kent waved his cap in air. They came tugging back to the schooner in clouds of spray, and the yawl was hooked on and hoisted at the cost of some splintered planks.

THE dripping sailors passed out a wet mop of a dog which wagged the stump of a tail, pluckily stood on its own four feet, and barked its thanks. Apparently the forecastle had gone raving mad. Men were hugging and pounding each other and wiping their eyes for tears and laughter. Captain Marlin Curtis ran forward, and the dog made for him at a wobbling, uncertain gait. It was an Airedale, and the skipper halted to stare with an expression of the silliest bewilderment. As though in a trance, he stooped, patted the dog, and fingered the brass plate on the collar.

"My God, Scotty, you tramp, what kind of a resurrection is this?" and there was awe in the master's accents. "Maybe there was something in the spook stuff, but you *feel* like a real dog and you *smell* like one."

The ghost dog's adoring eyes shone like jewels through the matted fringe of hair. He licked the skipper's hand, barked a greeting, and then turned to survey the deck. Duty came first. The crew was idling, as Scotty instantly noted. Wearily he trotted over to the nearest group and singled out "Splay-foot" Simmons, who hastily went about his business. The others took the hint and, discipline again enforced, Scotty halted at the galley door and asked the cook for his breakfast. Captain Marlin Curtis followed him and stood with his hands in his pockets, still with that utterly foolish air. The practical Mr. Kent, who had been pondering the problem during the trip in the yawl, walked forward to announce:

"Stood you on your beam-ends, has it, Cap'n? You're bright enough to figger it out, same as I did. It'll come to you in a minute. That little freighter must have been just astern of us the morning you

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stepped overboard. Day was almost breaking, remember?"

"And she sighted the dog and picked him up," said Curtis. "The rascal swims like a fish. You were with me once when he followed the ship's launch down the Kennebec. Head winds held that steamer back. She was a low-powered tub, and we finally overhauled her. With this last breeze of wind we were doing two knots to her one."

"Exactly," agreed the mate. "The collision happened at night, most likely, and the dog got overlooked when they tumbled out of the vessel. They didn't mean to desert him. Well, those niggers of ours are singin' a different tune. Luck has come back to the old *Jane*."

"We need it, Mr. Kent. Jim Edgerly is walloping the *Henry Dearborn* along, and he is two hundred good miles ahead of us."

The schooner swung off to spread sail again in a stern chase. Joyous and confident, the foremast hands were singing the old deep-water chorus:

"Sally's teeth is white an' pearly,
Heigh, ho. roll an' go.
Her eyes is blue, her hair is curly,
Spen' mah money on Sally Brown."

Yes, good fortune smiled on the stanch *Jane Wetherell*. Easterly winds continued to blow her homeward, but somewhere beyond her the *Henry Dearborn* was also making the most of this unusual weather. It was helping one vessel as much as the other, and Marlin Curtis frowned when he thought of that lead of two hundred miles. He crowded his ship as she had never been driven before, but he saved her from disaster by the intuitive vigilance and caution that stamped him as a superb seaman. When the Atlantic coast was less than five hundred miles away and passing steamers signaled that the other six-master was still ahead of him, he was ready to confess himself beaten.

These last days at sea were bitter with the winter's cold and the spray froze as it fell. Captain Curtis was on deck when a bleak and windy sunrise made visible a six-masted schooner close at hand. Two of her topmasts were gone and the great lower sails were split or tattered, three of them reefed to save what canvas remained. Captain Jim Edgerly stood upon the poop, stolid and burly, but he asked no aid nor waved a greeting. Ice sheathed the decks and rigging in a glittering armor, and the crew, huddled at the galley door, gazed in sullen dejection at the *Jane Wetherell* as she rushed past. Marlin Curtis flourished his cap, but there was no response. He read the story with a glance and said to the mate:

"She ran away with him. He carried on too long. And his men curled up and quit."

"All in the game, sir. You are the better sailor," quietly, truthfully observed Mr. Kent. "Jim Edgerly cracked, same as you figgered he might. He mishandled his vessel and he pays the price. You've licked him fair and square."

Marlin Curtis went into the cabin and cocked his heels upon the table while he smoked his pipe and occasionally spoke to the wistfully attentive Scotty, who seemed to agree with his reflections. From the safe the youthful skipper withdrew an envelope and read the document which the group of sedate shipmates had signed as witnesses in the Antwerp tavern. It was Captain Jim Edgerly's order on the managing owner for five thousand dollars, payable if the *Henry Dearborn* should finish behind the *Jane Wetherell* on the westward-bound passage.

"He is growing old, Scotty," murmured Marlin Curtis, "and he will be out of a job before long. We put the harpoon into him, all right, but I don't know about twisting it. He kicked you, but you are a good sport. Are you ready to call it quits, if I will?"

The Airedale barked approval. Marlin Curtis laughed and tore the documents to bits. When he sought the deck, the rugged headlands of the Maine coast were lifting mistily from the ocean. The schooner ran with a buoyant, eager surge and stride until, like a dab of crimson paint, the Portland lightship glowed against the dark shore of Cape Elizabeth. Soon a tug came trailing a banner of smoke, and the *Jane Wetherell*, lofty, noble, unmarred by the ordeals of the sea, began to fold her mighty wings.

As the tug drew near to pass a hawser, Marlin Curtis saw that a girl was standing beside the wheel-house. His sweetheart was waiting to welcome her sailorman home from the sea. His boyish, resolute face was radiant with love and pride and wonderment. The happy Airedale nuzzled his hand and he said aloud:

"Poor old Jim Edgerly! Scotty, boy, it has all come our way—everything in this blessed world that's worth having."

Jewels

By David Morton

THE sea has worn her ships like precious stones
That marked her bosom's tremulous unrest;
And for their loss no pendant moon atones
That rides eternally upon her breast.
For sunk armadas or a little boat
She still is wistful as a jeweled queen,
Who bears the burning memory at her throat,
Of barque and sloop and brilliant brigantine.

The epic chanted to each sounding cave
Is all of fleets gone down by lonely shores,
The shining spars, the sails, the light they gave
Now scattered darkly on her grievous floors—
And all the sea's long moan is like a sigh
For ruined ships remembered where they lie.

The Figurehead

By Charles Buxton Going

WHAT weary vigil, Lady, do you keep,
Fixing that dingy window with your gaze
Athirst to see the long gray billow leap
Out of the mist, or trace the sky-limned stays
And jib-boom, heaving in their giant sweep?

Breathless, the burning strip of pavement lies
Ten stifling fathom narrow. From the quay
Quivering heat and ceaseless clangor rise—
Yet still the hold yawns, empty; still sits he,
Crouched in that dirt-dimmed office, spider-wise,

Weaving his crafty web behind the pane,
Spinning shrewd charters, practising his wiles,
Sucking the pennies—while you languish, fain
To sight Barbados and the Windward Isles
Wrapped in the rolling purple of the Main!

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Hooley walked out of the ring while Dugan's seconds were bringing him back from dreamland.

Nemesis Has a Busy Day

By Berton Braley

OUR hero is not a romantic figure.

He is about five feet six and weighs one hundred and fifty pounds. His muscles are not what they should be, he has a bit of a stomach, and his features are neither particularly good nor particularly bad. Just commonplace.

When this story opens, he was earning about three thousand dollars a year and living in an apartment on Washington Heights. He had a wife and two children, made an honest return on his income tax, and during the war bought a thousand dollars worth of Liberty Bonds, which he had not quite paid for, contributed to the Red Cross and the War Camp Community, the Salvation Army and all the other war activities.

He was, and is, briefly, bourgeois, loves his family, believes in his country, thinks Bolshevism rot, but isn't worried about it, and, except for the events about to be narrated, lived, and still does, a life that is without much high romance. His age is forty-five. His name, Henry Perkins.

Late in 1919 an aunt of Henry's died. On Wednesday, January 7, 1920, a letter from the lawyer for her estate came to the Perkins flat, and he found it on his return from the office at six-thirty in the evening.

That had been a trying day for Henry. Business at the office had been heavy, a lot of little things had gone wrong, and he was tired and somewhat nervously irritable before lunch-time. That hour had been disturbed by a slight ruction with an insolent cloak-room boy and by a few words with an overbearing waiter. Henry returned to the office in an unplacid mood, which was not improved by various difficulties that obtruded themselves during the afternoon, and he did not get away until five-thirty.

On the street he was almost run down by a reckless motorist, and in the subway he was nearly knocked over by a young rough who rushed madly for a crowded express. Henry was then slammed into a packed train by a huge guard, stood all the way home next a man who coughed in his face, and almost had the breath knocked out of him by one of those hurried individuals who tried to get into the car before Henry got off.

To Henry's credit it must be said that when he reached his apartment he did not take his irritation out on his family, but kissed his wife, as he had done for twenty years, and greeted his boy, eighteen, and his daughter, fifteen, with paternal affection.

Then he opened his letter.

As Henry read, a slow grin spread over his face. There was a peculiar combination of malice, triumph and anticipation in that grin.

"What is it, Henry?" said Mrs. Perkins. "Good news? Something seems to please you."

Now any other evening Henry would probably have handed the letter over to his wife. But on this occasion he did nothing of the sort.

"Oh, nothing much," he answered, putting the letter in his pocket. "Just a note from Aunt Mattie's lawyer, telling me, what I always thought, that the estate wouldn't any more than pay its debts—including his fees, of course."

"Well, I didn't expect it would be more," his wife commented, "so there's no reason to be disappointed. Still, I don't see just why you should look pleased."

"I was only relieved that she didn't leave us any of that horrible furniture she had in her parlor," Henry explained, and his wife seemed satisfied.

BUT the truth is, that letter gave Henry an idea, or rather it brought into the realm of the practical a certain dream he had cherished for years, the sort of dream one nurses and coddles as a glorious impossibility whose fulfilment one imagines as joy ineffable, but unattainable. Up to the receipt of the letter Henry had been one of the clan the beatitudes tell us shall inherit the earth, but from that moment the long-suffering meekness of Henry Perkins was to be something else again.

One of Henry Perkins's pleasures was attendance at prize-fights, euphemistically called "boxing contests" under the state law. He belonged to an organization named

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the "Halcyon Athletic Club," which staged bouts every Wednesday night, and Henry would not have missed one of those affairs for much money. He was a fight fan of the first water and had come to know, by sight or to speak to, most of the local champions of all weights and sizes.

The historic evening of the receipt of his letter happened, as you will recall, to be Wednesday, and after finishing his dinner Henry left for the athletic-club arena. The main bout was to be a four-round affair between Knockout Dugan—*née* Isadore Oppenheim—and One-Round Hooley—*née* Hooley. They were light heavyweights and both sluggers.

However, it was not a very interesting bout. One-Round Hooley lived up to his name—in fact, he stepped into the ring, shook hands with Dugan, the gong rang, and Hooley hit Dugan under the left side of the jaw, lifted him two feet in the air, and walked out of the ring and into his dressing-room while Dugan's seconds were bringing him back from dreamland.

One-Round Hooley will be a champion some day—but that has nothing to do with this story.

After the bout Henry Perkins looked up the manager of the club and told him he wanted to see One-Round Hooley.

"All right; go back to the dressin'-room," said that dignitary. "You'll find him there."

OF WHAT transpired in that dressing-room you shall hear later, but the thing that now concerns us is that when Henry Perkins entered the subway station the next morning he was met by One-Round Hooley, in a neat blue serge suit, looking like the husky, clear-eyed, pleasant-faced boy that he was, and not at all as prize-fighters are supposed to look—but seldom do.

They entered the train together, for at this point on the line so dignified a word as "entered" is entirely proper. The journey down-town was without event until they reached Ninety-sixth Street, when Henry and Hooley got up to give their seats to two middle-aged women with gray hair. Into One Round's seat the larger of the two women settled; into Henry Perkins's seat flopped a fat and heavy-jowled individual of the Hebraic persuasion.

"I beg your pardon," said Henry courteously. "I gave that seat to this lady."

"Well, wot of it?" said the fat man. "I got it. You think you own this seat, ain't it?"

Henry jerked his head ever so slightly in the direction of the usurper. One-Round Hooley took the man by the necktie and several of his chins, brought him to his feet, held him off at a convenient distance, and then planted a sharp blow to what probably was the point of his chin before he hid it.

The form—if you call it a form—of the fat man sank gently to the floor.

"Madam," said Henry, "will you oblige me by taking your seat?"

The lady obliged him, and at about the same instant six men who had been hidden behind newspapers rose and offered seats to women standing near them. The fat man still reclined on the floor.

When the guard came over to see what had happened, Henry Perkins explained that the gentleman on the floor had fainted and would presently come to. Hooley, prepared for the occasion, thrust a bottle of aromatic spirits of ammonia under the man's nose and he revived. Hooley helped him to his feet.

"Arrest him, arrest him," the fat man began, as soon as he recovered sufficiently to speak, "he hit me!"

"How about it?" asked the guard. "Did you hit him?"

"Me," said Hooley. "Why should I hit him? Anybody see me hit him?"

He looked inquiringly around among the near-by passengers. Those who weren't reading newspapers with extraordinary interest answered his sunny grin with appreciative smiles.

A young newspaper man spoke up: "The gentleman," he said, "is simply suffering from a shock."

The guard went back to his place, the fat man rubbed his chin and glared at Hooley and Perkins and muttered to himself. But though four or five women successively slid into seats near him when men gave them up, he remained standing the rest of the way.

As they started to leave the car at Union Square, two men disregarded the request of the guard to "let 'em off," and slammed and pushed against Henry's not too powerful frame. Almost simultaneously the breath departed from both of them, as Hooley planted a right and left precisely in the pit of their stomachs. They were short-arm jabs, which traveled not more than six inches, but the two men careened backward, and the rest of the onrushing crowd stood aside and "let 'em off first" as the guard was requesting.

There was no shouting for arrest this time; the two men couldn't shout. They tottered over to the bench and endeavored to recover the power of breathing.

Henry Perkins, with his six-foot coadjutor at his side, stalked out of the station. That is, Henry stalked, for he was as cocky over the incident as though the blows were his own. Hooley only grinned and followed.

At his office door Henry left Hooley and plunged into his morning's work. And he did it with a zest which made the stenographers hustle to keep pace, and which caused the office boy to confide to the telephone girl:

"Say, Old Hank is sure buzzin' this mornin'. All kinds of pep. Musta had a shot in the arm or somethin'. If he keeps goin' this clip right along, he'll be takin' the sales-manager's job away from him."

Of course Henry hadn't a shot in the arm, but his vicarious effacement of three nuisances of the sort he had suffered from meekly all his working career had done something to his soul or his mind or his character. He was chuckling to himself all the morning as he worked. He felt younger, fitter, happier than for a decade.

NOON came before he realized it, and he clapped on his hat and briskly departed for Dorman's, where the day before he had his "run in" with the hat-boy and the waiter.

Hooley met him at the door and they went in together. Now the trouble the day before had started when Henry rebelled against checking his coat. But the struggle had been brief. The check-room bandit had taken the garment away from him, and Henry, cursing his weakness and meekness, had paid the triumphant and truculent boy ten cents to get it back again when lunch was over.

Hooley had no overcoat, for the day happened to be fairly mild. He wore a soft cap which he had thrust into his coat pocket. The hat-boy darted at Henry and seized his coat.

"I don't believe I'll check it to-day," Henry said firmly.

"Oh, yes, you mus' check. It is the rule," the boy insisted, trying to take the coat by main force.

A great hand reached over and took the hat-boy by the scruff of the neck and lifted him into the air.

"Where'll I hit him, boss?" asked Hooley.

"Don't hit him, spank him," said Henry Perkins, and at the word Hooley marched over with the hat bandit to a convenient chair, laid the kicking creature over his knee and spanked him hard, while a little knot of interested patrons of the restaurant stood around and applauded.

THE manager, hearing the cries of the check-boy, rushed into the group.

"What's this? What's this?" he demanded importantly.

"We're just reasoning with your hat-boy," said Henry. "He thought I was going to check my coat, and we had to convince him otherwise."

"Rule of the house," said the manager, "got to check your coat."

Hooley set the now weeping boy—he was thirty-five if a day—down off his knee and stood up beside Henry.

He poked the manager gently in the soft part of his anatomy:

"No," he mused, "it wouldn't do. He's too flabby, boss. I wouldn't dare hit him hard. I guess he's got a weak heart, and I don't want murder on my conscience."

He felt the manager's arm.

"Jelly," he mused, "jelly and lard."

The manager squeaked—yes, that is the word—with pain in the grip of the pugilist's mighty fingers.

"You see," nodded Hooley to Perkins, "I just take hold of him friendly like and he thinks I'm hurting him. I guess we'll just let him die of fatty degeneration, boss. Whaddyuh say? Bring your coat and we'll go in and eat."

Neither Hooley nor Perkins realized that the prize-fighter was filching stuff Dick Heldar had used on the pursy art-editor who thought he was going to steal Dick's pictures in "The Light That Failed," but they saw that the result was good. The manager, pale and trembling, uttered no further word as the pair went in to their meal.

The waiter was a man quite as big and much more burly than Hooley. And when, the meal finished, Henry dealt out a careful ten per cent. of the check, the servitor swept it into his palm and turned away without a word.

"Just a minute," said Henry pleasantly. "Haven't you forgotten something? What is it that he has forgotten, Hooley?"

"His manners, I think," replied the pugilist.

"Where do you get that stuff?" growled the waiter.

"My friend means," suggested Henry, "that it would be the part of courtesy for you to acknowledge my fair tip with a

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Oh, this was the life; this most assuredly was the life, he felt.

pleasant 'thank you.' And even to help me on with my coat."

"Aw, hell," said the waiter.

He landed at least four feet from where he stood, and though the carpet was heavily padded, he remained there until one of the other waiters threw water in his face.

Five other guests shook hands with Hooley and Henry. The manager came over, but without his air of importance. Henry didn't wait for him to speak.

"No trouble," he said, "none whatever. We had a little difference with the waiter, but it's all settled now. But I might suggest that it wouldn't do your business any harm if you'd instruct your waiters generally to be humanly polite."

THE manager had a brief return of his sense of authority. "Don't come here again," he warned, "this is no place for brawls. I don't want your patronage."

"Just a second, Thompson," said a gray-mustached man who had seen the spanking of the hat-boy and the encounter with the waiter. "That man got just what he had coming, and I, for one, will go somewhere else when Mr.—er——"

"Perkins," supplied Henry.

"When Mr. Perkins is not admitted here. And I think I'll have my monthly dinners elsewhere, too. Of course, if you change your mind——"

The manager swallowed hard. The man who spoke happened to be Silas Jordan, head of the Jordan Syndicate, one of the restaurant's best customers, and the dinner to which he referred was one that Jordan gave to one hundred salesmen and executives every month, at five dollars a plate. It netted the restaurant about three dollars a plate and much advertising.

"Oh, if he's a friend of yours, Mr. Jordan," the manager said, "of course, that's different. I'll fire that waiter. Mr—er——"

"Perkins," said Perkins again.

"Mr. Perkins, I'm sorry you were irritated. We'll try to do better by you in the future."

"Thank you," said Henry. "I did hate to change my lunch place. Good day, gentlemen." Shoulders squared, eyes shining, he breezed out of the restaurant, his coat on his arm, Hooley following.

How Henry Perkins, his afternoon's work done, felled a hurried person who tried to walk right over him on the way down the subway steps, how he convinced a huge subway guard that said guard was not necessarily intended as a pile-driver, and how, after receiving a gruff reply from a man who insisted on coughing in his face in a crowded car, he reproved him so effectively that the cougher, like the fat man in the morning, didn't come to for two minutes—all this with the approval of the interested bystanders, and without attracting the attention of the police—how these things happened would be mere repetition to relate in detail.

Of course it was Hooley who directly accomplished these various reprisals, but Henry was the impelling brain behind them, and was fast becoming possessed of the notion that Hooley was, in a sense, merely the instrument of Henry's own motor cells. This conviction was largely due to the instantaneous response Hooley gave to every signal of Henry, and to his anticipation, in one case, of any signal at all.

Thus we come to the chronicle of adventure, when Henry and Hooley, after debouching on Times Square that evening, decided to go forth as knight-errants in search of what material for their powers might offer. For Henry's dream had not been wholly of personal reprisals and revenge. In his heart was a high spirit of service, a Quixotic desire to do by his fellow men and women as they ought to be done by, and to do unto some of his fellow creatures as they ought to be done to.

Wherefore you shall hear of the masher who passed out suddenly and woke to find himself in the gutter, with mud and slush thick upon his garments, a sore jaw and an aching head, unable to figure just what had accomplished this amazing event, but dimly conscious that Nemesis had something to do with it. And we shall set down also the brief tale of the ticket-speculator who, having demanded five dollars a seat from Henry, whom he had led into a doorway on Forty-second Street, and who, having called Henry a "cheap skate" when the latter said it was too much, came to in the same doorway from the results of another of those terrible short-arm jabs, and found his supply of tickets scattered about his feet and out on the walk.

And we relate briefly the tale of the street-car conductor, who spoke with profane words to the lady whose transfer was not valid, and who immediately afterward apologized on his bended knees—to which Henry (meaning Hooley) had forced him; and the incident of the chauffeur, who tried to see how far he could make Henry jump to clear his car, and who, when held up in the next block by a traffic cop, found Henry and Hooley on the running-board beside him, where they rode with him around a block to a street less crowded, and there compelled the chauffeur to drive carefully and slowly past Henry six times as practise for future performances. And finally we arrive at the incident which brought the police into the picture, and brought Henry fame and f——

But that part of it, like what took place in Hooley's dressing-room, will develop a little later.

FLUSHED with his triumphs so far, and his immunity from attention on the part of the authorities of law and order, Henry boarded a pirate taxicab and ordered the driver to take him to One Hundred and Tenth Street and Broadway. He really didn't want to go to One Hundred and Tenth Street and Broadway, but this was part of his plan. Hooley, meantime, dropped into the subway and rode up on what we now call "Hedley's Limousine."

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NEMESIS HAS A BUSY DAY

The distance from Times Square to One Hundred and Tenth Street is three miles and a half. The legal taxi rate for that distance is not more than a dollar and a half. Henry lolled back against the cushions, contemplating his work so far with satisfaction, and looking with relish toward what the immediate future would bring. The cab drew up to the curb at One Hundred and Tenth Street, as ordered, and Henry was glad to see the big and not ungraceful figure of Hooley in the near distance.

"What's the damage?" inquired Henry.

"Three dollars," replied the chauffeur.

Henry craned around and looked at the meter.

"Out of order," the chauffeur snapped.

"Why didn't you tell me that before we started?" asked Henry.

"Aw, never mind that stuff," the chauffeur, who was a husky bandit, retorted. "I say three dollars and three dollars it is. Come through."

"I won't pay it," said Henry. "The legal tariff is about a dollar and a half."

The chauffeur got down off his seat, jumped to the curb, and towered over Henry menacingly: "Why, you little shrimp piker," he growled, "I'll knock your block off in a minute if you don't pungle up. What do you think I'm in business for, my health?"

At this juncture Hooley interposed. "Excuse me," he said, "what seems to be the matter?"

"What's it to you, you big stiff?" demanded the driver. "Who asked you to butt in?"

"Now really, Reginald, you mustn't speak so roughly to a stranger," reproved the pugilist. "I simply asked you a civil question." His voice changed from a purr to a snarl: "Answer it, bo, and make it snappy before I jump into the middle of your ugly mug."

FOR reply the chauffeur swung at Hooley, who knocked him down. But the chauffeur was of a different tribe from those Henry and Hooley had so far encountered. He was up and on his feet in an instant, and came boring in on One-Round Hooley after a fashion pretty close to professional. Henry's eyes, used to picking pugilists on points, saw at once that the chauffeur would have no real chance, but also sensed that it promised to be a nice little battle for a time.

His soul surged happily at the prospect, and his eyes gleamed as he watched the two big men going to it for all they were worth. Oh, this was the life; this most assuredly was the life, he felt. He danced about like a boy.

But he was not alone in witnessing the fight, for a crowd began to collect from wherever crowds appear, and a policeman came along soon, broke into the ring and parted the participants.

There was much swearing and argument on the part of the chauffeur, a quiet explanation on that of Hooley, a still further elaboration on the causes of battle by Henry Perkins. The upshot of which was that the officer, one of the alert, intelligent younger members of the force, handed a summons to both fighters and another as witness to Henry, and sent the driver, still protesting about his unpaid fare, about his nefarious business, first noting the number of his cab.

"I'm a rip-roaring, snorting buck from Bucksville, and they don't come too big for me."

When the case of the City of New York *vs.* James Hooley and Thomas Groben, for the disturbance of the peace, was called in the magistrate's court at ten o'clock Friday morning, one face at the reporter's table looked strangely familiar to Henry Perkins, but he couldn't place the man exactly.

The magistrate listened languidly to the policeman's testimony, then to that of the taxicab chauffeur while he told his sad story—how he had driven "this gentleman," pointing to Henry, up to One Hundred and Tenth Street, had jumped out to see what was the matter with the meter, and had been wantonly attacked by "this man," pointing to Hooley.

Hooley's side of the story seemed equally uninteresting to the judge, though he studied Hooley on the stand, and when One Round had finished his testimony, asked:

"You are a pugilist, aren't you?"

"I fight a little," said Hooley. "I'm a machinist by trade."

"Work at it?" the judge inquired.

"Every day," responded Hooley, "except to-day and yesterday."

"Where were you during the war—in the ship-yards?"

"Not on your life; I was in the old Sixty-Ninth in France," the fighter answered.

"That's all," the judge said.

"Henry Perkins," called the bailiff, and Henry took the stand.

NOW a magistrate's court is not a place where formal legal procedure is the *sine qua non*. For a police magistrate must deal with humanity in situations and under conditions where the rigid rules of evidence and insistence upon technicalities of the law would defeat the very purpose for which such courts exist. Besides which, this magistrate and that particular reporter who happened to be present were very good friends, and after Henry had given his version of the proceedings leading up to the fight between Hooley and the chauffeur, the reporter went up to the magistrate and whispered in his ear:

"Judge," he said, "I haven't had a really good story out of here for a month. This bird was with this big pugilist yesterday morning when I came down on the subway, and Hooley knocked a wowser cold for taking a seat from a lady. Ask our friend Henry how he happened to be with Hooley in the subway?"

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The judge nodded, and when Henry had finished his testimony regarding the taxicab fare, his honor asked, with a smile:

"Mr. Perkins, didn't you and Mr. Hooley have a little affair with some one in the subway yesterday morning?"

Henry started in his chair, paled, then straightened up and replied: "Yes sir, we did. But I'd like to explain that, if your honor doesn't mind my going back a little."

"Go as far as you like, Mr. Perkins," the judge conceded; "this is the only case we have left."

"JUDGE, this whole thing began about the time I came to the city fifteen years ago. I was a nice inoffensive young fellow, married four or five years, and owing ill to no one. All I wanted was to go to my work and come home as quietly as possible and have my few simple pleasures without injuring anybody else. I was, in fact, meek. And I've been meek for fifteen years—meek outside, I mean, but inside I've been getting more and more like a seething volcano. For, Judge, just because I didn't want trouble or just because I hated to be conspicuous, just because I looked like a fellow who wouldn't harm a fly, I've been trampled on and pushed around and jostled and jammed and banged and bullied and sassed and insulted whenever I've gone to work or come from it, gone to a show or dined at a restaurant. And, Judge, I was getting tired of it."

He sat up even straighter in the witness-stand and his voice grew more excited.

"You don't know how damned tired of it I was. But what good did it do? I might want to hammer the head off somebody who tramped on me, or a waiter who bullied me, or a taxicab man who held me up, but I wasn't built for it. So I stood it, getting madder and madder, and meaner and meaner inside all the time, and hating myself for being a little shrimp with no nerve. Oh, I used to sit and plan a regular campaign of busting people on the nose and throwing a beefsteak at a waiter, and all that, but of course it was only planning.

"And then, Wednesday night, I came home and found a letter from a lawyer telling me my Aunt Mattie had left me a thousand dollars. Judge, my wife doesn't know I inherited that thousand dollars. I told her the letter said that there wasn't a cent in the estate—and she believed me. I didn't tell her the truth because I figured she'd put the kibosh on the heavenly idea that legacy gave me.

"That idea was that I'd have one day—just one day, Judge—when everybody that started anything with me would get his, and get it good; one day in which I'd be dynamite and chain-lightning to anybody who rubbed me the wrong way; one day that I could look back on as having been something besides a scared little squirt with no pep or brass.

"So I went to the prize-fight that night, and I picked One-Round Hooley as the instrument I'd use in getting that one day. I'd seen him fight, and I liked his face, besides. So I went to his dressing-room and told him I'd give him two hundred dollars if he'd stick around with me yesterday and hand the wallop I knew he had to any one that I indicated. If he got arrested, I was to pay his fine if necessary; if he went to jail, I promised I'd pay him ten dollars a day while he was there.

"Judge, that boy has done more for me than any human being I've ever known. He's given me that day I've thought of and dreamed of and longed for; and although I myself didn't strike a blow or swat a swat, I feel to-day as if I could go up to a lion and swat it on the cheeks. I'm a rip-roaring, snorting buck from Bucksville, and they don't come too big for me. That's the way I feel now, Judge, after I spent yesterday putting the bee on the brutes and the kibosh on the cabbies. Hooley was the body of the job, but I was the soul, and every time I think of the trail we left behind us I lose a vest button. I don't care what happens to me after this. I've had my hour—several of them. But I hope you can let this boy off easy—for I'm the guy that's really responsible."

The judge lay back in his leather chair and laughed loudly and long.

"Discharged," he said to Hooley. "I'll fine the other man fifty dollars. Now tell me the details," he demanded of Henry, "tell me the details to the last drop of blood."

Henry told them, while the reporter listened and laughed and chuckled with the magistrate. And when Henry had ended the chronicle, the judge seized his hand.

"Henry," he said, "for you're like a long-lost brother to me at this moment—Henry, you're a public benefactor. You're a Don Quixote who put it over, and I'm for you. While I can't in my judicial robes formally commend you for such a career of law-breaking, I will go so far as to say I thank you, and if you commit any more such breaches, I'll use what influence I have to see that you don't get more than thirty days for them. What could be fairer than that?"

"What, indeed?" said the reporter, as he slipped out to catch the midday edition with his story.

He caught it, and when Henry arrived at Dorman's restaurant for lunch, he was greeted by a round of hand-clapping, led, he noticed, by Silas Jordan, of the Jordan Syndicate. As Henry paused, embarrassed and bewildered a little, Jordan rose and, coming over to him, said:

"Mr. Perkins, won't you sit at our table and tell us some more about your adventures of yesterday? We read it in the paper, but of course you can tell us more details. We've laughed a lot over it—and not *at* you but *with* you."

AND thus Henry Perkins, the meek, the somewhat mouselike, was led to a round table where sat seven of the biggest men in the paper trade, who listened and nodded and laughed and roared, as the judge had done, while he told again the story of his adventure as Nemesis. And something within Henry, something submerged by the years and by plodding unsuccess, began to warm and grow as he talked.

He *could* talk, he realized, for he was holding these men not by the actual adventure, but by the way he told it. He felt, as he had over his letters the day before, somehow electric, vibrant, almost youthful. As he went on, he seemed to sit outside himself and say: "That's the boy, that's it—you're getting 'em, Henry, old dear. Punch in that line! Why, boy, you've got personality. Who ever told you you hadn't? Where'd you get this idea you were just a poor little shrimp that was just able to hold down your job? Lift 'em, now, swing 'em! That's right. Now make 'em laugh—oh, boy, you've got 'em, you've got 'em—you're little old Personality himself."

That onlooker part of Henry was right. He did have 'em. He had 'em good. And when he finally glanced at his watch and said he had to go back to the office, those seven "big-bugs" rose as he rose, shook hands with him all around, and watched him swing out of that restaurant as though the world on his shoulders would be nothing but a feather.

"A winner, that little chap," said Silas Jordan. "Funny I never noticed him before, for he can't fool me with that talk about being a meek, colorless soul all this time. That stunt of his means originality and ideas. I must look him up. We could use a man like that in my organization."

"You saw him first, Silas," said William Brummadge, of Brummadge and Company, "so I'll give you until four o'clock this afternoon to land him. But if you don't connect by that time, you'll find his address during business hours is Brummadge and Company, 1670 Broadway."

WHEN Henry Perkins arrived at his apartment that evening, he was greeted by his spouse with the *Evening Planet* in her hand.

"Henry," she said, "what does this mean?"

"Just what it says," Henry answered. "I couldn't tell it half so well myself."

"And you've spent two hundred dollars of that legacy on a day of brawling and fighting?" queried Mrs. Perkins.

"I got out of it cheap," said Henry. "Besides, it was my money."

"I'm ashamed of you," said Mrs. Perkins. "You've always been so nice and quiet and genteel and now you drag our name through the papers. And spend two hundred dollars on a brute of a pugilist. It's horrid."

"Ye-ah," said Henry. "Say, old girl, do you think $2,000 a year more salary is worth two hundred dollars?"

"Of course it is," replied Mrs. Perkins, "but what has that to do with this?"

"Everything," said Henry. "This afternoon at two-thirty Silas Jordan telephoned to me and asked, just like that, if a job with his syndicate would appeal to me. I said it would, and met him when I'd finished at the office. I start in with him the first of the month. One hundred and sixty-five dollars a month better than I'm getting. And if I hadn't dragged our name through the 'papers' that way, I'd still be in my little old rut and hanging on by the skin of my teeth for fear I'd fall out of it. And the funny part of it is that when I tried to pay Hooley the two hundred he wouldn't take it. Said he'd never had so much fun since he brought back fifteen prisoners from the Argonne Woods. Honey, that reporter quoted me right. I'm a rip-roaring buck from Bucksville, and I'd just as soon slap a lion in the face as drink a glass of buttermilk."

"In that case, my dear," said Mrs. Perkins, "suppose you go down and tell the janitor we simply must have better service on the dumb-waiter."

"Oh, say, have a heart," said Henry. "There's a limit to everything."

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I'll Show You the Town

By Elmer Davis

CHAPTER FIVE (*Continued*)

FOR AN instant I lay breathless and quite devoid of thought; then I realized that I wasn't dead, that probably I wasn't badly hurt. Moreover, the heavy object that had slid into me as my descent was checked, was twisting about and had put one hand on my shoulder. It was Hazel. We had rolled into a heap of planking and picks and shovels—the wreck of a tool shanty—caught between a projecting spur of hard, unbroken rock, and the wall of the excavation; beside us, hardly a foot away, our ledge dropped off into the cut; and above us I could see a flat cake of cement sidewalk from which the supporting earth had fallen away. We were hardly more than eight feet below the surface; and through the choking clouds of dust drifting up from below I saw the outthrust limb of a tree hanging just above us. Somehow, that leafy bough encouraged me.

Meanwhile, Hazel had got her knee out of my side—the girl was a real athlete to do it in that position; and she raised her head and looked at me rather quizzically.

"Resuming our argument," she said, "you were just observing that life in New York is tame and peaceable——"

"We don't count things like this," I said irritably. "A street falling into a subway cut is an every-day occurrence—one of the incidents of progress. We're lucky a taxi didn't drop on top of us. That is—you're not hurt, are you?"

"Oh, no," she said calmly. "Neither hurt nor offended. I came to see the life, and I suppose this is it. But if you call this tame!"

The sheet of paving above us tipped, trembled, and broke loose—a dozen square yards of it. Hazel clutched my shoulder and gasped as it clattered past us with a great noise, but left us untouched. Above we heard many footsteps, and somewhere in the distance the clangor of a gong.

"For your friends from the coast," I said, "this would be a golden opportunity for strong-arm work. As for myself, I am no Douglas Fairbanks. However, I'd do what I could in the way of rescue if it were necessary. But here in New York we let the Fire Department pull us out."

AND within two or three minutes they had pulled us out—or rather had let down a ladder up which Hazel scrambled with ease, while I managed to follow her somehow, as a matter of personal honor. And then we were on the sidewalk once more, in the midst of a group of firemen and police and reporters, dusting off our clothing and trying to pretend that our pulse was no faster than normal. I caught her elbow and led her away—

WHAT'S HAPPENED

MY SERIOUS plan to devote the summer vacation to a book on Apartment House Life in Ancient Rome, which will secure me a full professorship in the Latin Department, is broken into by a number of annoying circumstances.

I am invited to address a convention of a Society for the Segregation of the Socially Inefficient at a fashionable and expensive summer hotel. This would afford a not unpleasant week-end were it not that the president of my home college, which my father headed before him, comes to town in distress and begs me to keep a protective eye on a certain lady, wealthy widow of an old benefactor of the college, who is going to the convention and whose person or money, of such possible usefulness to my alma mater, might fall victim to some unscrupulous fortune-hunter among the uplifters at the convention.

At the same time—and in accord with the same unfortunate reputation which I have suffered, of being a perfectly safe chaperon for girls or women, young or old, whose friends or husbands are too busy to bother with them—Cousin Edith hands over to me, to be entertained, a young million-heiress from the West who is unused to the ways of the city. I meet Mrs. Clevenger, the widow, and Hazel Deming, the heiress, and do my best to show them both the town and keep them out of danger.

Mrs. Clevenger, it appears, needs a great deal of showing, and Hazel a little restraint. The latter, just arrived, promptly gets into the papers by knocking out a masher on Broadway, and while we are later walking on Fifth Avenue, and I attempting to dissuade her from applying such violent Western methods to the slight emergencies of the peaceful life in the East, we are both blown into a subway excavation.

back into the Park, where it was cool and restful; but before we escaped, a policeman had taken our names, and Hazel remarked amiably:

"I suppose that means that I'll get into the papers again. Poor Mrs. Torrey—how she hates it. But somehow, things always happen to me. Where do we go from here?"

"I thought we might walk a little——" I suggested inanely; I lacked courage to tell her that my nerves were still shaky.

"Better not. You see, Sarah will be half crazy. I phoned her that I was lunching with Mrs. Torrey, but I'm due home; and she thinks I've been kidnaped whenever I stay out of her sight an hour. So let's go back. You see, Sarah got a bad start in New York. The first day we were here she was knocked down by an automobile hearse on the way to a funeral, and she didn't like the way the mourners looked out of the taxicab windows and laughed at her. So she thinks this is a wicked town. I thought what I did to the masher would show her I could look out for myself, but all she got out of that was another proof of the pitfalls in the way of innocence. Considering that last year I lived in a sorority house where I could do pretty much as I pleased, it gets on the nerves now and then. But I have to have somebody with me, of course."

"I hope she won't regard me as a pitfall in the way of innocence," I observed, "for I'd like to show you something of the town, besides the parts that lie below street level."

The Deupree conscience made a wild attempt to clutch the coat tails of those good resolutions that had been so lately formed, and were already sliding over the edge into the bottomless pit. But it was too late; the good resolutions plunged into the depths, and the Deupree conscience went away and held its head while the Gaylords laughed at it. I'd sworn I wouldn't show anybody the town. But I'd already started to show it to Agnes, and to show it rather intensively. And there was something about this Hazel. She ought to be cultivated, and entertained. For I loved my town, and I felt it would be an awful oversight to let anybody else have the pleasure of showing it to her. I tried to pretend to myself, of course, that it wouldn't interfere with my book; and of course I couldn't afford to let it interfere with Agnes; but I could certainly give a thought or two to Hazel in the midst of my other duties.

"Would Sarah let you go to the theatre with me to-night," I inquired, "and perhaps dance a little afterward?"

"I don't know whether she would or not," Hazel admitted, "but we can't make a—what do you call it—test case out of it, anyway; for Sarah is going to the Follies with me. You see, the first night we were in town I took her to the wildest, rawest show I could find—sort of pushed her in over her head, you see, and made her swim. After that she could stand anything, and we're seeing about everything."

"Then you can tell me something. To-morrow night I'm going to the theatre with—with the lady who is a friend of my college. She's rather strict, and I don't know anything about the plays that are running. Tell me something that is reasonably amusing and thoroughly sterilized."

"I think I'd try 'Grapefruit, Coffee, and Rolls,'" she suggested after some reflection. "Light but not lurid."

I thanked her.

"YOU see," I explained, "she's never been in New York before, and I am entrusted with the task of amusing her. Of course the conference begins day after to-morrow, but till then——"

"Did you say you were going to make a speech?" Hazel interrupted. "When?"

"Monday night."

"Can anybody come and hear you?"

Anybody could, of course; but Bonner had warned me not to let them meet. Yet I couldn't refuse her outright.

"It's a good distance out of town," I warned her, "and the trains aren't very pleasant. Unless you have a car, I wouldn't——"

"I have a car. Not much good—a two-year-old runabout. I'm going to buy a Sagamore, as soon as I get around to it."

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This was the sort of thing she had read about! New York was really as wicked as she had hoped.

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"Young man," said Mrs. Whitlow with stedfast determination, "do you propose to make that there automobile go seventy-five miles an hour?"

Here was a golden chance to change the subject.

"I know the head of the Sagamore offices here," I told her. "Man named Bonner. His showrooms are right over here on Broadway. Would you like to walk over and take a look?"

Hazel stared at me a moment, and broke into hysterical laughter.

"Thank goodness! You're stalling, too. Here I've been talking away as hard as I could so that you wouldn't think I was nervous or rattled—just to keep up with you. If you think we could go over to Broadway— Look at yourself. Or look at me—I suppose I'm as bad."

I looked at her. There was a black smudge across her forehead, and the green coat and white frock were torn and very dirty.

"Have you forgotten that we fell into a hole? If we walked over to Broadway now, we'd draw a crowd. Here—the Plaza's only two steps; you'd better come to my apartment and clean up. Sarah will want to meet you, anyway."

Well, I wanted to meet Sarah, after all Edith had said. For one thing, I'd been told to fire her. And Edith, I found, had given a correct description of Sarah. She was tall and gaunt and weatherbeaten, with gold-rimmed spectacles masking chill gray eyes that played over me and Hazel with icy disapproval. It was no day to do any firing.

"You've been fightin' again," she said grimly. "But why did you bring him here? Jail's the place for such as him."

"No fight to-day," said Hazel cheerfully. "This is Mrs. Torrey's cousin, Doctor Deupree. We fell into a big hole up the street."

"You look it," said Sarah, clutching my hand till she had satisfied herself that her grip was the stronger. "Now, go wash your faces, both of you; you look disgraceful." And after I had removed the traces of the disaster, Sarah managed to keep me feeling disgraceful. She led the conversation, and I gathered that she held me personally responsible not only for Hazel's mishap, but for the existence of subway construction, the dangers of metropolitan life, and the generally lowered character of the age. Here was one woman who didn't trust me, that was sure. She managed to spoil the call very completely. But when I presently decided to go I was repaid by Hazel's rueful, comradely smile as she gave me her hand at the door.

"She is a dragon, isn't she? But she's really a dear."

"I hope for opportunities to convince her that I'm safe."

"There will be opportunities," Hazel assured me through the closing door. "If I get my Sagamore in time, maybe Sarah and I will come up to hear your speech."

"You'd be bored to death," I cried in panic. But the door had closed.

CHAPTER SIX

Lesson Number One

BONNER came in as I was at breakfast on Thursday—Bonner in a dressing-gown of crimson silk edged with gold braid, his chubby face glittering with a high pink finish from his shave, his brow puckered with gloom.

"I saw your prospect," he began.

"Which prospect?" I inquired with a certain degree of high spirits; for yesterday had been a good day, and to-day promised to be a better one. "I have several prospects."

"The prospect you tipped me off to. The fat dame from Indianapolis."

"Already? Did you sell her?"

"Yes, already. No, I didn't sell her. Tell me, Doc—is this woman a friend of yours?"

"I should call her so," I answered after some reflection.

"All right, then. We'll forget all about it."

"What is there to forget about?" I demanded. "I want to know."

"I see," he commented. "Just tryin' each other out, so far. Well, you want to take your time, Doc. Believe me."

"What did she do to you?"

"Doc, she broke my heart. I've got so much to do runnin' the office that I don't often get out and try to sell anybody myself. But now and then I need to get out in the open; and because this woman was a friend of yours I thought I'd take about fifty dollars' worth of time yesterday afternoon and see what I could do with her. So I called her up and asked her if I couldn't run over to the Ritz and talk to her."

"Ritz? You've got somebody else. The Mrs. Clevenger I spoke of is

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The Dance of the Clay-Footed

By William H. Hamby

The resourceful young editor and the unfortunate fortune-teller lady of Professor Ormus's itinerant tent-show are here brought together by capricious but happy circumstance to make the clay feet of certain small-town idols dance to the tickling shots of their six-shooters of truth. Which composes an entertaining and satisfying tale, like those others of Mr. Hamby's we've printed.

CALVIN WADE, editor of the *Weekly Bazoo*, on his way downtown in the early dusk, turned into the Traveler's Inn to copy the names on the register. The Inn was the leading hotel in Buckeye Bridge—it was the only one.

He whirled the big spongy register around, dropped a pad and a pencil beside it and, leaning against the board desk, reached into his side coat pocket for an old brier-root pipe and a bag of tobacco. Wade was a tall, youngish man, with a lean face, gray eyes and sandy hair, and although his large-boned, muscular frame indicated undoubted vitality, he bore unmistakable signs of having been severely battered by hard usage.

As he touched a match to his pipe he became aware that there was a young woman in the lobby—they call it the office in Buckeye Bridge—sitting over by the south window looking out at the dusk. Wade felt a sardonic indifference toward women as women. As human beings, of course, they were entitled to have their names in the paper.

His pipe going, he began copying the names and addresses of the travelers who had registered at the hotel during the past week; but his eyes lifted directly from the register to look across the lobby at that girl. She piqued his interest. In Buckeye Bridge women are not supposed to sit in the hotel lobby. It is not quite proper. Of course they have to pass through it to get to the desk to register and to pay their bills, but they are supposed to hurry away as quickly as possible, leaving the chairs and the room sacred to the smoke and jests and profanity of the coarser, more privileged sex. But that girl sat there with her legs crossed, a newspaper in her lap, looking out of the darkened window, as supremely indifferent to the men in the lobby as—Wade was to women.

He copied a dozen more names and addresses, and looked up again. Her elbow was on the window-sill, her chin in her hand. Her traveling suit looked well made. She had dark hair and a soft white cheek. Although there was something worldly wise and defiant in her indifference to her surroundings, there was also something wistfully pathetic in the turn of her face to the dusk outside the window.

"June Willis, Memphis," was the last name signed on the register. "That," said Calvin, "is she."

Wade was whistling—an unusual thing for him—when he let himself into the printing-office, locked the door behind him and lighted a coal-oil lamp—Buckeye Bridge did not have electricity. For ten minutes he sat tipped back in the chair, his long legs thrust far under the desk, smoking the brier-root pipe, while his eyes rested on a magazine picture which one of the printers had stuck up over his desk, of Maude Adams as *Peter Pan*.

"I wonder what she is here for?" He was thinking of June Willis at the hotel and not of Maude Adams. "Anyway, she's darned lonesome."

He unlocked and opened the right-hand drawer of his desk and took out a handful of typewritten sheets, and ran through them until he found four pinned together, headed: "Enoch Cunningham."

"My Christian friend," he said, smiling grimly as he slipped a fresh sheet into the dilapidated old number-two typewriter at his elbow, "I have another toe to add to your clay feet."

Almost all keen-witted men who have been buffeted by hard realities develop a streak of cynicism. Some of them mix it with dyspepsia and a bad disposition and use it to make enemies with; while others keep it under cover and use it merely to whet their humor.

Wade was of the latter sort. While he understood a country newspaper was designed to print pleasant platitudes about paying subscribers, he had a penchant for gathering actual facts and touching them up with incisive caustic comments, merely for his own amusement. And he had not only eyes and ears and a nose for news, but a remarkable faculty of knowing people and knowing what they would do under given situations.

Often after the day's work was done he returned to the office and for his own sardonic amusement wrote out stories and character-sketches about people in the little town. This collection of unprintable news he called the "Dance of the Clay-Footed."

Having finished adding an additional touch to Enoch Cunningham, Wade returned the sheets to their hiding-place and smiled grimly as he thought what a difference between the news that had gone into the paper and that which had gone into this drawer. Every mention of a citizen in the paper was a complimentary pat on the head; but every page in that pile was a shot at his clay feet. And what a wild jiggling dance of those clay feet there would be if he should open fire with those stories!

He was startled from his humorous speculation by a knock. When he unlocked the door, the girl of the hotel lobby was standing on the step.

"Come in," he invited.

She did, and took the chair he offered. In the closer light he saw that her eyes were dark—shadowy, rather than black; that she looked tired; that her well-made suit was much worn, and that there was a patch on one of her shoes. But she was attractive—most positively so.

"I wonder," she said, as though explaining her call, "if you happen to get a Memphis paper?"

"No, Miss Willis, I am sorry I do not."

Her brows lifted in quick surprise at the use of her name, but she made no reference to it.

"Have you been in Buckeye Bridge long?" she asked casually.

"Only two years," he answered. "I wandered into the town by mistake and found the only newspaper had died of attrition, and they picked on me to take charge of the wake. I've been the *Bazoo's* editor ever since."

Her lips parted in an appreciative smile. "I suppose," she suggested, "you know most everybody?"

"Yes, everybody—and Enoch Cunningham." The thought of Cunningham had been decidedly galling of late and he did not hesitate to speak of him to a stranger.

Again her lips parted for a smile, but her shadowy eyes took on a keener interest.

"Who is Mr. Cunningham?"

"HE IS what you might call a leading citizen. If you could take Julius Cæsar, Anthony Comstock, a Methodist preacher and a Jew pawnbroker and roll them all into one small man with a strut and a frock coat, you would have Enoch."

The girl laughed outright at that. "Is he a friend of yours?"

"On the first of the month," answered Wade. "I lease the printing-office from him. He also watches my uprisings and downsittings, and comes around quite often to tell me what to put in the paper, and what to leave out."

"Do you do it?" she turned her head and looked at him searchingly.

He met her eyes and the grim humor twisted the corner of his mouth. "What do you guess?"

"I guess not," she answered promptly.

"Guess again." He rubbed his left hand across his chin and looked down at the desk. "For two years I have printed what this town wanted me to print; the real news I have written and filed away in the right-hand drawer."

She leaned forward interestedly and her shadowy brown eyes looked up into his face. "How exciting!" she exclaimed.

"It would be," he bit the stem of his pipe grimly—"to Buckeye Bridge."

She arose. "I saw your sign and the light as I was passing," she said by way of further explanation, "and I thought I might find a Memphis paper."

"I'm sorry," he replied, "but Memphis is not on my map; missed seven meals in three days there once."

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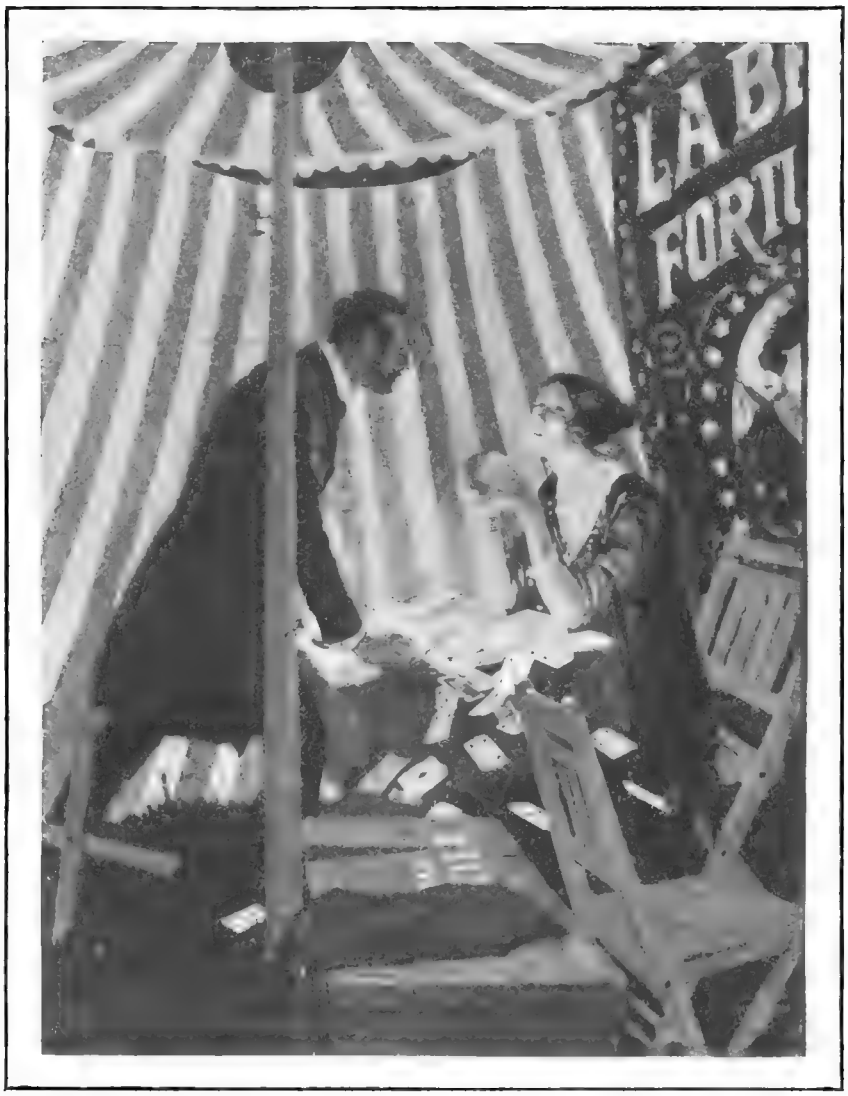

Enoch held back, and when the last one passed out, turned quickly back to the fortune-teller. "Where did you get that stuff?"

"Only seven?" she lifted her brows. "You did well." And she was gone.

"Now, I wonder," Calvin speculated as he reached into his pocket for the bag of smoking-tobacco, "just what she came for." He refilled and lighted the pipe. "It wasn't a Memphis paper," he added after a couple of puffs. "A woman never gives the right reason—usually because she does not know it."

Calvin closed the print-shop door and went out on the street. Already most of the lamps in the windows of the little town had grown drowsy and winked out. It was a quiet town. Wade smiled into the semi-darkness—but it was home, the first home he had known; and he had come to like it. A puff of warm September wind scurried a bit of paper across the street, the smell of ripe apples came from the big orchard south of the town. He drew a deep long breath.

Wade believed that he had no sentiment, that he scorned women. He considered himself a swearing, smoking, roughneck printer. He did not even know that he had imagination. But as he passed the Traveler's Inn, he glanced up, and seeing something white in one of the darkened windows wondered if it was June Willis.

It was. After her return she had gone to her room and to bed almost immediately, but she could not sleep. She got up and wet a towel from the cracked pitcher and bathed her temples, but still she could not sleep. Something in the journey through the hills that day, or a touch of rough sympathy in the editor's eyes, or possibly the night itself, had stirred in her a homesickness like which she had not felt for twenty years.

She stared wide-eyed at the moon and bit her lips bloodless. She had learned in these bitter years not to cry.

From across the street came a whistled tune—a singularly clear, detached, tune—as though the man who whistled it were thinking of something else. She slipped down in a chair and put her head out of the window. Her clinched teeth released her pinched lip, and slowly a smile gathered around her mouth. It was, she was sure, the rough cynical newspaper fellow, and he was whistling "Comin' Through the Rye."

ENOCH CUNNINGHAM stood before the glass in his down-stairs bedroom, carefully parting his hair in the middle and smoothing it down with a brush. Enoch was a widower of eleven months' standing, and the Buckeye Bridge Ladies' Aid had, after extended discussion of symptoms, unanimously agreed that Enoch was "perking up" and beginning to "look around." Some of them had intimated that he probably would not look very far—or long; that he was almost sure to marry his stenographer, and they doubted if he waited the full twelve months.

Enoch was particular as to his appearance, even when attending so signally an undress affair as the town council. He felt that a man in his position—he owned about half the town—owed it to the world to set a good example.

The Buckeye Bridge Town Council held its monthly meetings in a vacant storeroom just south of the Merchants' and Traders' Bank. The three other members sat loungingly waiting around the unpainted board table, on which were a smoky coal-oil lamp and the minutes of the previous meetings, when Cunningham entered. He always presided in the absence of the mayor. "Good evening, gentlemen." Enoch took off the broad-brimmed soft beaver hat with a slight flourish as he briskly closed the door behind him.

Tom Shannon's eyes, half hidden behind a screen of smoke, held a look of amusement. Tom was the town's leading lawyer and a member of the council. It was that hat on the pious, pompous little man which had prompted Shannon's former remark that no man who intentionally wears a broad-brimmed hat is intentionally moral.

Enoch bustled into the waiting chair, hitched it forward, laid his hat carefully to one side and said briskly:

"Gentlemen, shall we proceed to business?" He had caught that amused look on Shannon's face, and, as always, it nettled him.

"The first business," said Cunningham, taking a paper from his pocket, "is this application for a show license from Professor Ormus. It is a matter I think we should consider very carefully. Nothing affects the morals of a town more than its amusement."

"How much can we get out of him?" drawled Shannon from behind his smoke screen. Enoch and his town council—for Enoch owned it all but Shannon—vastly amused the lawyer.

Cunningham cleared his throat a little gingerly and touched his pointed beard with thumb and two fingers. "He only wants to pay twenty-five dollars a week. Perhaps he would go to forty. But that is not the point. Is this show, gentlemen, the kind we want in our town? Will it be for the upbuilding of our youths? Will the money spent be wasted?"

Shannon's secret smile changed into an open grin. He knew the show was a foregone conclusion, for it would rent the vacant lots south of the lumber-yard from Enoch.

"No," the lawyer shook his head deprecatorily, "I fear, Brother Cunningham, this show will not lift the spiritual level of Buckeye Bridge. And the money spent will be wasted. I agree with you we must not allow monetary considerations to influence us. I move the application be rejected."

"But, gentlemen," Enoch hurried to head off a second, "we must not be hasty. If we deprive our people of all amusement, sometimes they may choose secret and worse evils. Perhaps it will be better to leave it to a committee to investigate the nature of the professor's show."

This suggestion met with approval, and

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the two members who always agreed with Enoch were appointed.

After transacting a little other business—like ordering two crossings on Main Street, one opposite Enoch's store and the other opposite his hotel—they adjourned.

"Jim!" Enoch tapped the fat alderman from the First Ward on the shoulder, after Shannon had gone, "Perhaps you better let the fellow have his license. If the show proves unsuitable, I'll have Wade print a piece in the paper advising people not to patronize it. Wade will do anything I say, you know, for when he came here," Enoch touched his pointed beard, "he did not have a cent—not a red cent. I took him up and gave him a start, and he has done well, mighty well. You know, gentlemen, I think that is really the finest work a man can do—giving young men a start in life."

The fat alderman laughed. Even he took an occasional thrust at Cunningham.

"Wade did most of the starting himself, didn't he, Enoch? I thought the paper was dead on your hands until he took it over."

"The man and the opportunity," said Enoch, wagging his head wisely. "That is it. I furnished him the opportunity."

CALVIN WADE stood at the case slinging type into the stick. He had one printer and an apprentice, but he did much of the type-setting himself, often writing the article in his head as he put it into type. He loved the feel of the type, its quick, sure click into place; loved the imposing-stone, the make-up forms, the job-press, the old cylinder news-press, the smell of the ink, the littered desk at one end of the print-shop that served as an office, even the balky gasoline engine. One of these days it would all be his. He had already come to think of it as his own.

He began to whistle as he worked. He was thinking of that girl again.

"Good morning, suh." Wade ceased his type-clicking, his composition, his whistle and his reverie all at once and turned from the case. A large, portly man, wearing a checked vest and a silk hat, had entered the open door.

"Are you the editor, suh?" the caller inquired, lifting his straw-colored eyebrows.

"I am," Calvin nodded. "Have a chair."

"My name is Ormus—Professor Caldwell Ormus, suh." He extended a large, vigorous hand. "I dropped in to get acquainted and make some preliminary arrangements about advertising ouah show and having some handbills printed. I think we are going to have a good business in youah fair city." There was something uneasy, almost pathetic in the large face of the flamboyant professor, as though he were whistling in a graveyard—and had done it before.

He ordered a full-page advertisement in the Thursday issue and five thousand handbills. He paid in advance with a little flourish from a large roll of bills, but Wade noticed when a five peeled off, ones and twos followed.

"Show business pretty good, professor?" asked Calvin when the transaction was finished.

"Magnificent, suh, magnificent." But after a moment's pause in which lines deepened in the large rotund face, he added: "Of course we have ouah bad luck same as other people, but we don't mind it—if too many bad towns don't come in a row. But we'll do well heah, I'm shuah."

"Well I'll be damned, Enoch!" he said. "When I took a shot at your clay feet, I didn't know I was going to shoot both your legs off."

"I hope so," said Wade sincerely.

"One thing that has made it a little bahd"—the professor had sensed a sympathetic listener—"one of my performers—Goldie, the Goddess of the Sea—took the influenza in Mortonville. When she went to the hospital, we lost one of our best attractions, suh. And those robbers at the hospital are charging us fifty dollars a week for taking care of her. That doesn't mattah, though, certainly not.

"Of course," he became reminiscent, "some attractions pay and some do not. You can't never tell. Now there is La Belle, the Fortune-Teller, one of the brightest girls I ever had, but she's been playing to bad luck. I can't figure it out. She's a good girl, and smaht, but somehow she just don't get the dollahs."

The professor scribbled something on a slip of paper. "Heah is a pass to any of ouah shows for you and a friend—I judge you are not married, suh?"

"Thanks." Wade took the pass and crumpled it into his vest pocket. "No, I've never found a woman yet willing to go fifty-fifty, doing without what I haven't got."

They both laughed; and the professor put out his hand at parting. "It has been a pleasuah to meet you, suh."

That afternoon Wade was again at the case and once more the type was clicking, but he was not whistling. From time to time he glanced out of the window and became so absorbed in speculation that his fingers ceased to dive into the type-boxes.

"Good evening, Wade."

And without looking over his shoulder, Calvin answered, "Good afternoon, Mr. Cunningham."

The editor laid down the stick and turned to meet his second visitor with a slight reluctance.

Enoch had never looked quite so impeccable and exemplary as now. His beard had been freshly trimmed, his hair bore signs of very recent perfumed oiling and his small black eyes fairly jiggled with self-appreciation.

"I've got a little piece for the paper." He handed Calvin a typewritten sheet.

Wade took the article and glanced at the heading without enthusiasm. He was rather sick of running Enoch's effusions. He read the first paragraph and then ran down the page hurriedly. It was an attack on Professor Ormus's shows.

"Pretty good, eh? Old man some writer himself?" He nudged his elbow toward Wade. "That'll fix Ormus's shows

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all right. It is a perfect waste for people to spend money on things like that—and besides it is not good for the morals of the town—nothing elevating or instructive."

"But you have given the professor a license, haven't you?" Wade felt a rising temperature running through his veins.

"Oh, sure," smiled Enoch shrewdly. "The city needs all the revenue it can get. As a council we have to think of that. We got seventy-five dollars for one week."

"And you leased him your vacant lots?" remarked Wade slowly.

"Certainly, certainly," said Cunningham. "That is business, you know. But this," he tapped the article in the editor's hand, "is to keep him from getting our business."

Wade shook his head. "I won't print it."

"Oh, yes, you will," said Enoch with affronted surprise. "Most certainly you will, Mr. Wade." There was threat in the tone and his small black eyes. "Your lease expires week after next—and there are a half-dozen men would like to have the paper. Oh, yes," he nodded his head knowingly, "you'll print it all right."

Slowly Wade tore the paper in his hands, tore it in two, doubled it, tore it again, wadded up the scraps and threw them into the waste-basket, and turned squarely on Enoch.

"You damned, thieving hypocrite! Get out of my office."

AT EIGHT o'clock Wade locked the door of the print-shop and turned down the side street. He had had no supper, but he did not remember it. For three hours since Enoch Cunningham's call he had been sitting at his littered desk going over things.

He knew what his defiance of Enoch meant, knew it at the time, and did it deliberately. Two years of work gone, and in one more week he would be adrift again—odd jobs, soiled clothes, freight-cars—a tramp-printer.

But he was not sorry. There were some prices a man could not pay. He was mad, seething, scorching mad, mad at luck, mad at Buckeye Bridge—but above all, at Enoch Cunningham.

He turned up the shoulder of the hill toward Tom Shannon's house—maybe the lawyer could do something about his lease. Half-way up he stopped and turned about. It was no use. Nobody could make Enoch renew that lease now, after what he had said to him.

And then Calvin's ear caught the boom, boom, of a bass drum and the clear high call of a clarinet, with the rattle and blare of other instruments, and his eyes turned to the west edge of town. Lights were flaring, and a dozen tents stood in a row along the vacant lots beyond the feed-mill. The show was on. Wade turned down the hill.

The professor's outfit looked like the left wing of a street carnival that had wandered off alone to do the small inland towns. There were a dozen tents of the side-show variety—a stuffed shark, a fat lady, a collection of war relics, trained fleas, "A Man-Killing Gorilla," a small vaudeville show and a fortune-teller. The professor himself had a high box under a flaring light where he sold jewelry and magical compounds for cleaning the teeth, the silverware or the intestines.

Wade sauntered along the row. Toward the far end the crowd thinned out, and before the last tent, the fortune-teller's, were only three or four ribald youths making raucous comments about a girl who stood in the doorway. The light was not very good here; but Wade saw she stood defiantly indifferent. His heart took a dozen beats in a sort of run-and-jump. It was the girl who had come to the printing-office last night—June Willis. She was made up as a gipsy and her dark hair added to the effect, but he could easily recognize her.

"Have your fortune told, sir?"

He nodded. She led the way into the inner room, lined with red draperies and furnished with the soiled cards, the crystal ball and the rest of the paraphernalia of the fortune-teller. Dim-colored lights added to the effect.

He sat down in front of her and put out his hand without looking up. As she took the hand in hers, he saw her fingers were long, smooth and strong. And her voice was singularly clear and magnetic.

"You have been crossed in love," she began in a professional patter, "and you have lost money, but you will be rich. You are going to take a journey soon."

"Oh, don't!" He jerked his hand away roughly, took off his hat and looked up at her. "Don't talk rot to me—don't you know me?"

And looking down into his sober gray eyes with a smile that made her face bewitching, she added in the same tone: "You have a good heart, and a bad newspaper. Yes, I know you." She released his hand. "And how are you?"

"Rotten!" he said savagely. "Since last night everything has gone flooie."

She shook her head; dark rings showed under her eyes.

"It is a rotten world. I haven't told but two fortunes to-night—and this the opening night. I ought to have taken in ten dollars at least. I just don't seem to get them. I suppose I never shall learn the trick of it."

"Oh, yes, you will," he encouraged. He was sorry she felt badly.

"But," she smiled as though shaking off her own affairs, "you haven't told me about the flooie business. What has happened to the paper?"

He told her—told her all about it, except that the break was over the show. He had to tell somebody, and he felt a bond of kinship in trouble with this wandering fortune-teller.

"And what are you going to do about it?" she asked, looking steadily into his eyes.

"I'm going to blister them," he said wrathfully. "I'm going to make this town wish it had never been born."

"How?" There was a curious light in her brown eyes.

"You come around to the office tomorrow afternoon," he answered, "about half-past five, and I'll show you."

WHEN the girl entered the office the next afternoon, she wore a light dress and pale-blue hat. Wade looked at her with a sort of hungry surprise. She was lovely, positively lovely.

He gave her a chair before the desk, near his own, took a key and unlocked the right-hand drawer, and brought out a handful of typewritten sheets. There was grim sardonic humor in his face.

"I told you last night that for two years I have printed what this town wanted printed. At the same time I have written what I wanted to write and stuck it in that drawer.

"There are more than a hundred citizens laid out in that pile of manuscript. No pious platitudes of fulsome flattery there—nothing but the real, unvarnished, clay-footed stuff.

"There are stories here," he laid his hand flat on the typewritten pages, "that would laugh men out of town, that would send them to jail and the divorce court. There are enough explosions in that pile to rip this smug, callow town wide open, and every word of it is the damned truth too."

He handed a bunch of the sheets to her. "Want to read some of it?"

He lighted his pipe and puffed with suppressed but vindictive satisfaction as she read.

In a moment she began to smile, then broke into a ringing laugh.

"Why, this is rich—positively rich. Are they all as good as this?"

"That is one of the mild ones," he answered grinningly.

"What are you going to do with them?" There was excitement in her eyes.

"Print them," he replied, grimly biting his pipe-stem. "I'll print twenty-four columns of them in my next and last issue." He opened the left-hand drawer of the desk and took out a gun.

"And I have this to get out of town on."

She sketched quickly through two or three more, and again came the ripple of spontaneous laughter.

"My!" she exclaimed. "What a mint of character secrets! If I had that stuff, I could make a thousand dollars telling fortunes next week."

"Take it." He dropped the revolver in the left-hand drawer and pushed the sheets toward her. "Take the whole damn pile."

THAT evening the Ormus shows had a bad night again. Plenty of people gathered around the box and the gasoline torch to listen to the professor's flamboyant oratory, but few bought of his tinseled jewelry or magical compounds. Plenty of people wandered around the front of the tents to see the free shows, but fewer even than last night ventured in.

Quite late, after all the crowds were gone but a few idling stragglers, and the lights in front of the tents were being put out, Calvin Wade came up the street from the south, entered the outer room of the fortune-teller's tent, and called, "Hello!"

"Come in." The girl's voice came from the dressing-room behind.

Calvin hesitated a moment, then pushed aside the cloth curtain and stepped in. There was a lamp on a dry-goods box. The gipsy outfit hung on hooks suspended from a side rope, and the girl sat on a trunk, her hair disheveled, her hands locked around her knees, a picture of utter dejection.

"How was it to-night?" he asked casually.

"One," she replied. "One little rusty fifty-cent piece."

"It will be better to-morrow," he encouraged. "Now get out those biographical sheets." He was already unwrapping a large pasteboard box which he carried under his arm.

"You see," he explained, "Gardner, the

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photographer, is a friend of mine. He has been here twenty years, has made pictures of almost every man, woman and baby in the county, and kept a sample of every picture. I think I have photographs of at least ninety of the people mentioned in those sketches."

Beside the name at the top of each typewritten sheet they pasted the picture of that person and then pinned the sketches in alphabetical order on the curtained walls of the room.

"Now," he said, surveying their work with a grin, "you have their past. Foretell that, and let their future go hang.

"When a fortune-seeker comes, seat him in your dim bespangled room out there and tell him you must retire into a trance for a few minutes in order to read his past." He laughed and touched one of the pictures. "From this photograph you can quickly identify him, and in three minutes can sketch down the page until you know enough of his past to scare him into utter belief in ghosts, black art—and fortune-tellers."

"Oh, I believe it will work." A look of anticipation and admiration came into her shadowy brown eyes.

"I take it," said Calvin, "that the batting average of a fortune-teller does not have to be high. One strike in ten will win the game. If from these photographs you can identify one now and then, the mysteries you reveal will be all over our town in a few hours, for there are secrets in there that even the police do not know."

She put out the light and they went out at the back of the tent. He walked with her to the corner. They stopped a moment, her hand on his arm, and looked back. The town was nearly all dark now—quiet and shadowy.

"You'll pick up two or three to-morrow whose fortunes you have diagrammed," he again encouraged, "and after that they'll come like sheep. Before Friday you'll be making money hand over fist."

"And what are you going to do?"

Her hand still held his arm, almost clung to it. She felt less lonesome than she had for many years.

"After next week," he answered, "I'll be back at my old job—a tramp printer."

"Isn't that rotten!" Again the quick vehemence in her tone, and her fingers tightened on his arm.

He laughed—less sardonically than for many months.

"It improves the world a whole lot for you to think it rotten on my account."

THERE is nothing a man cherishes reminiscently and conversationally like some unsolved mystery in his life. And if he can but have one mystery solved by another, then has he experienced interest supreme.

Timothy Scott raised cows and cabbages and sorghum and turnips on a little farm south of Buckeye Bridge. Scott had a mystery. Three years ago his favorite cow had disappeared as into thin air. Not a trace of hide nor hair was ever found. Tim spent a large part of his waking and talking hours detailing that mystery. When he heard there was a fortune-teller in town, the slow but sure pull of an opportunity to put his mystery up to the spirit powers overcame his thrift.

At ten o'clock Thursday morning, when there was the least probability of his being spied upon by ridiculing neighbors, Scott appeared before the tent of La Belle, the Fortune-Teller. He entered gloomily, defiantly, suspiciously, a smooth half-dollar clutched in his grimy palm.

The fortune-teller seated him in the appointed room, with the soiled cards, crystal ball and colored lights. She excused herself a moment to get into commuication with the powers who solve mysteries. A hurried glance around the room and she spotted in a moment the photograph of Tim Scott. In two minutes more she had read, in Calvin Wade's droll style, the story of Scott's life mystery. She returned.

"You are a farmer," she began dreamily. "You raise cattle. Your name is Ti-Timothy Sc-Scott." The farmer gave a little scared jump. This was uncanny.

"You lost a very valuable cow," went on the fortune-teller, peering hard into the farmer's palm. "It had a white spot on its forehead, and a white right foot." The farmer felt chilly spirit-fingers playing along his spine. "The cow disappeared and you never heard of her again." She paused.

"What became of her?" Tim asked huskily. The loss of this cow was one of the big tragedies of his life.

The fortune-teller shook her head. "I don't like to tell you."

"You must," he demanded. "That is what I paid you a half a dollar for."

The fortune-teller looked steadily off into the mystic distance and spoke slowly. "Your son-in-law stole this cow and sold her to a man named Brooks, who killed her for beef."

In thirty minutes Tim Scott was back on Main Street with a dozen men around him, demanding that they explain to him, if they could, the great mystery of how a woman who had never seen him before should know these strange secrets. And two hours later he had a full confession and seventy-five dollars in cash from his son-in-law.

BURT GRIMES heard the Scott marvel, and after an hour of uneasy hovering on the brink of folly, took the plunge and invested fifty cents. Twenty minutes later he came out white and staggering.

And a little later in the day when La Belle told Jim George, a sawmill man, where his old log chain had been hidden the last year by hallowe'en prankers, and Jim had actually recovered the log chain—why then excitement really began to break loose.

By the time the flaring gasoline torches were lit in front of the shows and the professor had mounted his wooden box a goodly crowd had gathered, but they were mostly bunched in front of the fortune-teller's tent, waiting their turn.

They went in singly or by groups. And when, an hour afterward, La Belle told Mrs. Godsell, the town's most virulently virtuous backbiter, in the presence of two Ladies' Aid sisters:

"Madam, I'll give you a puzzle. You have been married but once; yet one of your sons is a half-brother to the rest"—her reputation was made—and Mrs. Godsell's remade.

At midnight the fortune-teller closed her tent. In her dressing-room she dumped the contents of a cigar-box on the board table, and counted out sixty-eight dollars and fifty cents. She had succeeded for once. Her face was flushed with pleasure, her eyes lighted with humor. And for once she had given the people the worth of their money. She would repay the professor some of her indebtedness. Really, for three months she had not earned her expenses. She was happier than she had been for years. The flap at the back of the tent lifted and she turned quickly.

"Oh, it is you," she laughed gaily at Calvin Wade. "Look here." She ran her hand over the pile of silver.

"You are a celebrity all right," Calvin grinned. "You are the main topic of conversation in about three hundred bedrooms right now."

Directly Calvin remarked: "They have all cleared out now—and it is time for us to go. I'll wait for you outside." He stepped out the back way until she could change into her street clothes. As he stood in the shadow of the tent, he discovered there was a man under the tree at the edge of the lot south, and he knew it was Enoch Cunningham.

As they went up the deserted street, June was holding the editor's arm in a tight, happy grip.

"It's a lovely night, isn't it?"

"Probably," replied Calvin, "but I'm busy with something else. That devil Enoch has got to be taken care of someway. Have you read up on him yet?"

"No."

"Do it early in the morning and I'll get him to your tent during the day. He runs the council, and he is trying to hatch up something on you so he can close the show."

FRIDAY morning Enoch Cunningham entered his office as one resolved. For two days the coals of retribution had been smoldering under the pot of Enoch's wrath.

Ingratitude, the ugliest viper in human nature, had stung him. After all he had done for Calvin Wade—a mere tramp-printer—Wade had not only refused to print his article warning people against the Ormus shows, but had actually come out in this week's issue with two full pages boosting that show. Well, this would be Wade's last issue. He would see to that.

And there was that fortune-teller, taking the idiots' money for fake fortunes. Opposition to any of Cunningham's suggestions turned them into moral issues.

"Miss Watts, have there been any telephone calls this morning?" He spoke most punctiliously to his stenographer.

"No, Mr. Cunningham." The young woman's green eyes watched him hang up his hat and draw up his chair to the desk. She touched her yellow pompadoured hair. She had very definite designs on Enoch, and she put a little sirupy sweetness into her, "No, Mr. Cunningham."

"Mr. Cunningham," Miss Watts threw out the sirupy tone again, but did not look up from her work, "have you heard the wonderful stories that fortune-teller has been telling people?" It was Calvin Wade who had suggested to her that it would be jolly to have Enoch's fortune told. But it had already occurred to Miss Watts it might be more than jolly. If they could only go together the fortune-teller might see—

"No," Enoch snapped, "but I know some stories on the fortune-teller that would open peoples' eyes—the silly donkeys!"

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The stenographer pecked the typewriter gingerly a few minutes.

"I'm going to have the show closed up," said Enoch in a minute. "Immoral!"

Miss Watts almost gasped. She wanted that fortune-teller party very much—and in half an hour had a good foundation laid for it.

Directly the telephone rang. It was the fat alderman from the first ward.

"Say, Cunningham," he began, "this town is going plumb daffy over that fortune-teller. If we shut 'em up, there's going to be a lot of folks kickin' up a row over it—unless we can show 'em we are right. Don't you think we better drop in down there and investigate ourselves?" He did not mention that Calvin Wade had suggested this line of defense.

Enoch cleared his throat. He remembered what Miss Watts had said—remembered it as though he had thought of it himself.

"There is something in that, Jim."

"Betty wants to get two or three girls and go with us." Betty was the fat alderman's daughter and a bosom friend of Miss Watts. "Suppose we make up a little party and go down there about eight o'clock. We'll have some fun stringing her, anyway."

At ten o'clock Enoch met the council, all except Tom Shannon, in a specially called session.

"Gentlemen," said Cunningham with righteousness gimleting out of his small black eyes, "I have positive proof that the fortune-teller with the Ormus shows is a lewd person. I saw a man slipping from her tent at midnight last night. We can't," Enoch struck the board table with just wrath, "tolerate that sort of thing for a moment. The shows must close—all of them. But I suggest that we give them until midnight to-night." Then informally after the council adjourned he and Jim fixed up the plan for the personal investigation of La Belle's fraud.

This matter settled, Enoch went direct to the printing-office. The paper out and mailed, Calvin Wade was sitting at the littered desk, the brier-root pipe in his mouth, reading the exchanges. He did not stir or look around as Cunningham entered the door. Enoch stopped just inside, parted his feet slightly, put his small hands under the tail of his coat, and reared back until his small chest stuck out. Face to face with this callous piece of ingratitude, wrath jiggled black specks in his eyes.

"Well, sir," he managed with smooth coldness, "your lease will not be renewed. Is it your purpose to give up the property peaceably, or shall I have the sheriff serve a writ of ejection?"

Wade looked up slowly from his paper, turning his pipe in the direction of the strutting little man.

"I go when my time is up. Get out of my light." And he resumed his reading.

AT EIGHT o'clock fifteen people sat in the entrance of the fortune-teller's tent waiting their turn and a hundred more waited outside. But for an hour she had told no fortunes. From time to time La Belle parted the curtain and looked out on the impatient but awed seekers, yet summoned none of them.

Early that morning she had followed Wade's instructions to study up on Cunningham and had read the five full pages the editor had devoted to him. And all day she had waited with a restless impatience the coming of Enoch. Wade had sent her a note by messenger before noon saying that Cunningham had decided to close the shows at midnight, and June was equally divided between wrath at Cunningham and pity for Professor Ormus. The poor old professor was just now beginning to make a little money, and to rob him by charging exorbitant license and then to close his show was a dirty shame. If only Cunningham would come! Well, he'd get a fortune that he would remember!

There was a stir outside. The laughter and voices changed tone. La Belle parted the cloth hangings and looked out. By the door of the tent was a little man with a pointed beard, a Prince Albert coat and a strut. The fortune-teller's heart pumped hard and fast and her shadowy dark eyes glowed. It was Enoch with a party of four ladies and a large fat man.

DURING the day the fortune-teller had read over several times the five pages which Calvin Wade had devoted to Enoch Cunningham. But she centered her attention on one particular story until she knew it by heart. It opened thus:

"On the evening of August 23, 1918, I went to Cunningham's house to see Enoch about buying some new type for the printing-office. He was not at home, but his wife, who was very sick, called to me from the bedroom off the hall and asked me to come in. I saw she was terribly ill and troubled, and sat down by the side of the bed. She began, speaking scarcely above a whisper; 'Mr. Wade, you are a stranger here, and a man I believe I can trust. I am going to tell you what I have never told any other human being.'"

As La Belle, with flaming red gipsy shawl about her shoulders and an artificial red rose stuck in her black hair, slipped languidly into her chair on the little dais, she was close enough to Enoch to touch him, but she did not even take his hand. Instead she sat for a moment with her lids slightly drooped, her shadowy dark eyes looking fixedly down at the pompous little man as though piercing his veil of pious dignity. The other five were seated in a half-circle around him. Miss Watts managed to occupy the chair just at his left and gave him a coquettish sidelong glance which was intended to convey to the fortune-teller a clue to his future.

The fortune-teller continued without a word for a few minutes to look fixedly at Cunningham, as though in a sort of a smoldering trance. Enoch touched his pointed beard and shifted a little in his chair. The rest were all deadly still. He could even hear the September wind swishing against the tent outside. The dim light gave a weird reddish tinge to everything. He felt queer. He did not like that look in the fortune-teller's eyes—it was too intent and not sufficiently admiring. Suppose there was some queer hocus-pocus in this, whereby—

"Your past begins to unroll before me." She spoke slowly, hypnotically. The listeners felt a sort of shiver at the tone—it did seem like silly babble.

"You came from the East—east of here—Illinois, wasn't it?" She did not look nor wait for a reply, and her voice glided on, stronger and more positive. "Yes—it was Illinois. I see a large country town. You made some money, but your partner went to the penitentiary. They could not quite prove it on you; and because of your smug reputation they let you off. There were also two girls—young girls—but you covered that up too."

Enoch had stiffened in his chair. The blood came into his face, he parted his lips as though to say something crushing, but glancing to one side saw Miss Watts's green eyes fixed inquiringly on him. He moistened his lips and tried to smile.

"One day," the fortune-teller went on, her eyes never wavering from Enoch's face, "a traveling show came to that town. With it was a very beautiful, lovely girl. You became infatuated with her."

There was a slight pause, and the fat alderman shifted his chair so he could see the side of Enoch's face.

"She was honest," resumed the fortune-teller, "and told you she had a little girl five years old."

"You offered to marry her, if she would discard the baby daughter. She loved that little girl, and it nearly broke her heart, but she did what you demanded."

Two of the girls in the party gasped and Miss Watts's eyes were fixed in a sort of strained pleading on Enoch, but he sat as though carved of wood, staring straight up at the fortune-teller.

"She took the poor little baby girl"—there was a stir of tears in the fortune-teller's voice—"and left her with a sister of the child's father. And"—a dramatic pause—"the mother never heard of her again."

Once more the silence was broken only by half-smothered gasps.

"Ten years ago," the fortune-teller's voice changed, the pathos was gone and in its place was something implacable as fate, "your wife's parents relented and left her an inheritance of sixty thousand dollars. She made you promise before she died that you would find her daughter and give the money to her."

The fat alderman gasped and tried to cover it with a cough. Enoch's fingers were clutching the edge of his Prince Albert coat, his feet locked together under the chair.

"But instead," she leaned a little nearer, and her shadowy dark eyes branded upon his consciousness, "a month after her death, you went before the probate judge and made affidavit that your wife had no living relatives."

For a full minute not one of the seven people in the tent stirred. Then, as with a desperate effort, Enoch jumped to his feet. Without a word they all started to file out of the tent. No more fortunes for them.

Enoch held back, and when the last one passed out, turned quickly back to the fortune-teller.

"Where did you get that stuff?"

She only shook her head.

"When and where can I see you?" He moistened his lips and swallowed.

"In an hour," she replied, "at the printing-office."

CALVIN WADE sat in the printing-office smoking his old brier-root pipe. It was dark. The door was closed and he did not light a lamp. But the moonlight shone in through the south window and fell on a type-case and touched the belt of the old cylinder press.

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Calvin got up and moved about the shop. He stopped by a type-case and picked up a letter. It was new type he had bought. He loved it—and the old press and the smell of ink and the pile of exchanges. He loved the whole thing. It had been home to his mind; it had been an abiding-place for his interests and activities. He went to the window and stood looking out on the town, soft and shadowy in the moonlight.

This was his last issue, the last paper he would edit. His money and his work he would leave here to that pirate.

There was a rap on the door, a quick, small, hurried rap such as a girl would make. He turned quickly. June Willis flashed into his mind—something had gone wrong with her. He swung open the door. "Come in."

It was she. "What is up now?" he asked anxiously as he closed the door behind her and felt in his pocket for a match to light the lamp.

"Nothing," she reassured him, but she was breathing excitedly

When he turned from lighting the lamp, she stood at his elbow, her face flushed, her eyes big, like a little girl's who has run home with some thrilling news.

"He came," she was still catching at her breath, "and I told his fortune. It scared him into a cataleptic fit. He's coming here directly to see me."

They sat down to wait. Wade crossed his legs and puffed away reflectively, a grim smile around his mouth, while she studied him with a curious speculation in her shadowy eyes.

"You had that on him, and still let him close you out—take the paper from you?" she said.

"Oh, yes," he nodded. "Of course I couldn't use a thing of that sort for my own advantage."

"Well," a look of fierceness swept the girl's face, "you just watch me!"

ENOCH came in directly. He lifted his broad-brimmed beaver hat with an attempt at jauntiness, but Calvin saw some of the strut had gone from him—the little man had been badly shaken. Wade did not arise, but let Cunningham find a chair for himself.

Enoch cleared his throat. "I am simply curious," he said with a show of offhandedness, "to know what suggested all that rigmarole to you. Of course there was, you might say, an odd coincidence about part of it—a semblance of truth that might—" he paused.

"Yes, it might," she suggested acidly. "Especially as it happens to be the confession your wife made just before her death to Mr. Wade."

At that Enoch visibly jumped. He had feared the editor was back of the story, but this was worse than he had feared.

Calvin nodded affirmatively. "Yes, Cunningham, that is true. I happened to go to your house to see you one night and you were not at home. Your wife called me in and told me the story, and asked me to be a witness in case it was needed."

"Yes, yes," Enoch pinched his chin through the narrow beard and batted his eyes hard. "What she said was true. But I did it to shield her from disgrace. And after her death I carried out her wishes to the letter. I made careful search—even went back to the town and found the aunt who had cared for the child, and learned the girl had died at ten years of age. That was why I made the affidavit before the court that my wife had no living relatives."

The girl raised her head and looked at Enoch with an ironic smile.

"Mr. Cunningham, the cards indicated, when I was telling your fortune, that the aunt had died three years ago. It was only a few months ago that you went back, wasn't it?"

Enoch squirmed in his chair. This wandering fortune-teller knew too much. He had discovered on his trip back to the little Southern town that the aunt had died penniless three years ago, and the girl, now grown, had gone to Memphis and been swallowed up so effectively he was pretty sure she would never return.

"Enoch Cunningham"—whether by accident or intention the girl's tone sounded like that of a judge, and Enoch started nervously again—"the little girl you made your wife leave that night stood on the doorstep as the carriage drove away and screamed into the dark with her arms held out for her mother, until the aunt, crying as hard as the little girl, carried her in and put her to bed—ill. The aunt was so angry at the mother for deserting the child for *you*"—there was withering scorn in the "you"—"that she never spoke her name—until just before she died. Then she told the girl the whole story and gave her positive and abundant proof to establish her identity."

Enoch had gone ghastly white and seemed shriveled up.

"And Mr. Cunningham," once more La Belle's dark eyes fixed the guilty little man, "that girl is not nearly so dead as you wish—I am she."

It was Calvin that jumped then, even more astonished than Enoch. "June!" He had grabbed her arm. "Is that true?"

Her brown eyes met his and smiled. "Yes."

Calvin mechanically reached into his pocket for the bag of tobacco, refilled his pipe, and turned on Cunningham a grim, mocking smile.

"Well, I'll be damned, Enoch! When I took a shot at your clay feet I didn't know I was going to shoot both your legs off. But you haven't a leg to stand on, Enoch, not a leg. The mother's fortune goes to the daughter."

THE difference between reality and sham is not in the number of people it convinces, for often sham gets the larger following, but in the way it withstands assault. Calvin Wade, watching with amused cynicism, saw the mean, pompous, overbearing little man's unearned wealth and false reputation and corn-stalk house of moral platitudes all tumbled about his head.

"I—I—won't be blackmailed," he stammered, almost chattering. "There is no proof."

Wade laughed. "No, of course not. Blackmailing is your job. As to the proof, we will leave that to Tom Shannon."

Enoch almost jumped from his chair. "That is not necessary. If—if the girl has the real proof, I want to do what is right! How much," he asked desperately, "do you want?"

"Let's see." Calvin laid down his pipe and picked up a pencil. "You got sixty thousand dollars of her mother's money ten years ago. The interest at eight per cent. would be forty-eight thousand dollars—makes one hundred and eight thousand dollars in all. The law in this state allows a husband one-third of the wife's estate. You owe Miss Willis seventy-two thousand dollars."

"Impossible!" Cunningham gasped. "That would ruin me—it would take almost everything."

"It won't," said Calvin grimly, "but I wish it would. That is the figure—and you had better be thankful the interest is not compounded."

"I'll fight it," said Enoch weakly.

"Not with that perjured affidavit on record." Wade picked up his pipe and resumed his smoking.

Enoch's legs fairly wobbled as he got up.

"Well," he was white around the eyes, "if it can be managed so as not to injure my reputation, I might make a settlement to-morrow."

"One settlement to-night." The girl had also risen. "Make out a bill of sale for this printing-office to Mr. Wade. I'll deduct the price of it from the seventy-two thousand dollars."

Enoch's spirit seemed mashed into a pulp. Without a protest he sat down at the desk and wrote out and signed a bill of sale to Wade. Then he got up and went out as though walking in a nightmare.

CALVIN and the girl stood looking at each other speechless for a moment after he was gone.

"My aunt," said the girl, her eyes drooping, "told me before she died that my mother had married a man named Cunningham—and they lived here. That is why I persuaded Professor Ormus to come to Buckeye Bridge. I—I wanted to see her again—I was so lonesome.

"I didn't know," her voice broke, "until I got here, that she was dead. And I never dreamed until I read your story of Enoch to-day that she had inherited a fortune."

Calvin blew out the light. He would walk back with her to the hotel. His glance swept the shadowy office with its splotches of moonlight on the type-cases and the old press. The smell of ink came to his nostrils. It was his! At last he owned a newspaper. But he was not as happy as he ought to be.

Out on the street she took his arm. They did not say much. At the hotel she made no move to go in, but walked on, still holding his arm rather closely.

"Isn't this a queer mix-up?" he said at last. "A little turn of the wheel and you are rich—and I am a real newspaper man."

"Isn't it!" she replied. "I'm still not awake."

"I've wanted the paper a long time," he remarked slowly, "but don't care for it now. I don't think I'll want to stay in this town after you are gone."

Her fingers closed tightly on his arm; she stood so close at his side her hair brushed his shoulders.

"I'm not gone." It was a soft, vibrant voice, with laughter under her breath. She looked up at the moon and began in the sing-song patter of the fortune-teller:

"Young lady, your name is June—and you've traveled a good deal, but you are very domestic, and would love to have a home. Your life has been crossed by a tall man with sandy hair—and I can see you are going to stay in a small town—for a good while."

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The Colyumists' Confessional

X. "B. L. T.," *by Himself*

THE gifted palmist, a lady amateur, knew nor who nor what I was; indeed, she had confused me with a celebrated builder of bridges, who was also of the party that arrived at the artists' camp for the week-end; and so she must be acquitted of pleasantry. She took my hand, and having studied the network of mysterious lines (they are always referred to as mysterious lines) she said:

"*You have a remarkable faculty for getting other people to do your work.*"

And there—as Noah remarked to the missus when the *Ark* bumped Ararat—you are!

Running a column is as simple a matter as driving a golf-ball; you "let the club-head do the work." The club-head, you surmise, is the contributor, and observe how unwearyingly he performs. The question is, what sets him going? Ah! What force initiated the motion of the planets, spinning unwearyingly around a central sun? Tell me that and I will tell you t'other thing.

Glend. I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

Hotspur. Why, so can I, or so can any man. But will they come when you do call for them?

The nays appearing to have it, let us consider briefly the psychology of the contributor.

He contributes because he yearns to express himself, and he needs a vehicle for his thinklets. But he is, generally, particular about his company; he likes to feel that he is a member of a family of choice intelligences. Once installed there and managed with a firm but kind hand, he will work his head off, content with an occasional "Very good," or "Not so bad," or "We have seen worse." If he gets out of hand, he must be "treated rough;" he must be reminded that you accord him space which you could fill very much better yourself. This usually returns him to a proper frame of mind.

His enthusiasm is boundless. My eyes sometimes grow moist when I think of it. Captains of finance will let their morning mail cool, or will miss the noon golf special, in order to concoct a promising wheeze. Traveling men ride with their heads out of coach-windows, questing odd names and signs. Professors become absent-minded in classroom, meditating sonnets. Bread burns in the oven while housewives metrically extol the glamour of the springtime. The traveler in China or Peru post-cards that he has found on the bill of fare my pet aversion, bread pudding, in one of its many disguises. Never was industry more unselfish! They come to believe, not unnaturally, that they are the Column, that without them it would crumble into dust, one with Nineveh and Tyre. There is no harm in letting them think this. It keeps them contented, and nobody is a penny the worse. So much for the contributor, although he deserves an entire essay. With this for an afterword—

Tell me who contributes and I will tell you what you are.

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Bert Leston Taylor.

THE CHICAGO SUNDAY TRI

A LINE O' TYPE OR TWO.

How to the Line, let the quips fall where they may.

THE corner-stone of my column, if columns have corner-stones—probably not—was laid—

A-many years ago,
When I was young and charming—

about, I should guess, twenty-one. It was my first assignment as a reporter on the New York *Herald*, and naturally I was more moved by it than the city editor. This was a stern, profane man, approximating the city editor of fiction; but as he happened to be a crony of my father's (they used to foregather, with Pat Gilmore and other worthies of the period, in the rear of Hudnut's drug-store and pass the prescription bottle), I did not close my eyes with holy dread when I saw him approaching. I met him in the corridor, and mentioned that my assignment was to report the opening of the excursion season on the Hudson River. "How much shall I write, half a column?" I inquired carelessly. And I have marveled since at his self-restraint. He placed a hand kindly on my shoulder, and said: "My boy, I have only eight columns for the entire city of New York."

It was better than a long lecture on the art of condensation, "the last and greatest art, the art to blot." I reviewed in a "stickful" the voyage of the steamer *Grand Republic*, and it was printed as written, with a single but illuminating change: "Rhine of America" became plain "Hudson River."

Years afterward, when I came to lay the corner-stone of the Column, which was "The Cannery," the first jar on its shelves was "Rhine of America."

To relate the history of "A Line o' Type or Two," from its genesis in 1900, would require, as Max Beerbohm once remarked, a far less brilliant pen than mine. It began as a spiral nebula, and evolved into a solar system. Ten years ago I should have welcomed an invitation to talk about it. But these invitations always come too late—or too soon. To-morrow's column interests me, but not the columns of yesteryear. The earth has made eight journeys around its sun since last I put any of their contents between covers. You see, my work-desk is near that of the literary editor, and I mark with a melancholy eye the bales of new books that are dumped there day by day. Why add to that dismal miscellany? In the golden age of "best-sellers" I addressed a pantoum

TO A TALL SPRUCE

Pride of the forest primeval,
Peer of the glorious pine,
Doomed to an end that is evil,
Fearful the fate that is thine!

Peer of the glorious pine,
Now the landlooker has found you,
Fearful the fate that is thine—
Fate of the spruces around you.

And so forth. It is too long to quote. Besides, it occurs to me that the title of this series is "The Colyumists' Confessional." One should, then, confess something. Let me begin by saying that I have never printed a paragraph that did not amuse or interest me first of all. The thought that nobody else might find it amusing or interesting was never a reason for discarding it and substituting another. I should prefer to write only for children, and these I should study to please; but since I must write for grown-ups, these may read or run—*cela m'est égal.* Thus, by pleasing myself I have contrived to please an uncertain number of others.

"Easily pleased," you remark, with a suspicion of a sniff. Oh, ridiculously so! Queer names, for example, interest people enormously. The mispronunciation of

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English words is a never-drying spring of innocent merriment. Likewise the blunders of writers and printers, the rhapsodies of the small-town society editress, the sentimental splurges of the half-baked bard. My contributors being as easily amused as I, it is with such trifles that they inundate me. By the way, I know very few of these contributors personally or by name. Some of the most brilliant of them have never disclosed their identity; for there is a pleasure in anonymity. And then the multitude of one-shot minds! The wheeze or jingle expressed, they return into the silence. As Phrasilas observed at the banquet in Alexandria, while he was still able to articulate: "Perhaps each of us has only one thing to say in his life, and those who have attempted to speak at greater length have done so because they were inflated by ambition."

To resume the Confessional:

Q. How many letters do you receive a day? A. Normally from eighty to a hundred. If there is some silly competition going on, the number jumps. If the competition is uncommonly silly, it snows contributions.

Q. Do you invent those paragraphs from country newspapers? A. You flatter me.

Q. Do the country editors mind? A. Rarely. They know that I used to be one of them, and that I believe that if Candide had not taken to gardening he would have become a country editor.

Q. Why don't you write serious stuff oftener? A. Too rich a diet for the reader. He needs a certain amount of "roughening."

Q. When are you going to get out another collection of your inimitable verse? A. Probably this fall.—Adv.

Q. What do you consider the best feature of your column? A. Its typographical arrangement.

Q. What is your honest opinion of what you have so wittily termed "the so-called human race"? A. If I have had a good sleep, I am willing to admit that there may be a deadlier species in the universe.

Q. Are you fond of Art? A. I perfectly love it.

Q. Do you ever get tired of running the column? A. What good would that do?

Q. How *do* you keep it up? A. I lean against it.

I have written a few things that I liked, and which the compilers of anthologies always pass over in favor of something of even less consequence. *Voilà!*

CANOPUS

When quacks with pills political would dope us,
  When politics absorbs the livelong day,
I like to think about the star Canopus,
  So far, so far away!

Greatest of visioned suns, they say who list 'em;
  To weigh it science always must despair,
Its shell would hold our whole dinged solar system,
  Nor ever know 'twas there.

When temporary chairmen utter speeches,
  And frenzied henchmen howl their battle hymns,
My thoughts float out across the cosmic reaches
  To where Canopus swims.

When men are calling names and making faces,
  And all the world's a-jangle and a-jar,
I meditate on interstellar spaces,
  And smoke a mild seegar.

For after one has had about a week of
  The arguments of friends as well as foes,
A star that has no parallax to speak of,
  Conduces to repose.

"TREASURE ISLAND"

Comes little lady, a book in hand,
A light in her eyes that I understand,
And her cheeks aglow from the faëry breeze
That sweeps across the uncharted seas.
She gives me the book, and her word of praise
A ton of critical thought outweighs:
"I've finished it, daddie!"—a smile thereat.
"Are there any more books in the world like that?"

No, little lady, I grieve to say
That of all the books in the world to-day
There's not another that's quite the same
As this magic book with the magic name.
Volumes there be that are pure delight,
Ancient and yellowed or new and bright;
But—little and thin, or big and fat—
There are no more books in the world like that.

And what, little lady, would I not give
For the wonderful world in which you live!
What have I garnered one-half as true
As the tales Titania whispers you?
Ah, late we learn that the only truth
Was that which we found in the Book of Youth.
Profitless others, and stale and flat—
There are no more books in the world like that.

WHEN IT IS HOT

Consider Mr. Shadrach,
  Of fiery-furnace fame;
He didn't bleat about the heat,
  Or fuss about the flame.
He didn't stew and worry,
  And get his nerves in kinks,
Nor fill his skin with limes and gin
  And other "cooling drinks."

Consider Mr. Meshach,
  Who felt the furnace too;
He let it sizz, nor queried "Is
  It hot enough for you?"
He didn't mop his forehead,
  And hunt a shady spot;
Nor did he say, "Gee, what a day!
  Believe me, it's some hot!"

Consider, too, Abednego,
  Who shared his comrades' plight:
He didn't shake his coat and make
  Himself a holy sight;
He didn't wear suspenders
  Without a coat and vest;
Nor did he scowl and snort and howl,
  And make himself a pest.

Consider, friends, this trio—
  How little fuss they made!
They didn't curse when it was worse
  Than ninety in the shade.
They moved about serenely
  Within the furnace bright,
And soon forgot that it was hot,
  With "no relief in sight."

THE WHITE-THROAT

High on a still unbudded bough,
  You sing your measured song;
The wilderness is with me now,
  A thousand memories throng.

The breathless grove, the windy hill
  With poppies all astir,
The wayside rose, the tinkling rill,
  The flash of wing and fur.

The river, done with wandering,
  The silver, silent shore—
These come before me while you sing—
  These things, and many more.

Your music in the haunts of men
  Is sweet as April's sun,
But oh it is as sweet again
  Where unnamed waters run.

For in the brush the birds are few
  That have the gift of song;
And so my heart goes out to you
  The woodland way along.

THE DINOSAUR

Behold the mighty Dinosaur,
Famous in prehistoric lore,
Not only for his weight and strength,
But for his intellectual length.
You will observe by these remains
The creature had two sets of brains—
One in his head (the usual place),
The other at his spinal base.
Thus he could reason *a priori*
As well as *a posteriori*.
No problem bothered him a bit;
He made both head and tail of it.
So wise he was, so wise and solemn,
Each thought filled just a spinal column.
If one brain found the pressure strong,
It passed a few ideas along;
If something slipped his forward mind,
'Twas rescued by the one behind;
And if in error he was caught,
He had a saving afterthought.
As he thought twice before he spoke,
He had no judgments to revoke;
For he could think, without congestion,
Upon both sides of every question.
Oh, gaze upon this model beast,
Defunct ten million years at least!

TO JULIA—STYLES OF 1913 (OR 1920)

Julia, I am far from prudish
  (Though in virtue trebly armed),
But when I behold you nudish
  I am also far from charmed.
You may fancy you bereave me
  Of my senses: truth be told,
Your avowed revealments leave me
  Absolutely cold.

Were your various lines Hogarthian,
  That were "something else again";
Ere I fled, no arrow Parthian
  Should be pointed with my pen.
You may flaunt your lines before me,
  Far from ravished is mine eye.
Au contraire, they merely bore me;
  I've no cause to fly.

Julia, just a word between us—
  Further I'd not have it go:
You are not a sea-born Venus,
  As the merest glance will show.
If this friendly counsel passes
  I should also like to add,
Love's not blind—why give him glasses
  Till his eyes are bad?

Lady, though your clothes are lawful,
  They are in the worst of taste.
Julia, you are something awful,
  And your judgment is misplaced.
History, that dates from Eden,
  Puts us next to Nature's plan:
Only beauty that is hidden
  Tantalizes man.

At next month's Confessional Jay E. House, of the Philadelphia* Public Ledger, *will appear.

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Sealed Proposals

A Twenty-Per-Cent. Potter Story

By Thomas Addison

Here is another of those rattling good business stories by Thomas Addison. Since his introduction Twenty-Per-Cent. Potter has become a favorite of all folks interested in the romance of keen, clean American business life.

I

IT WAS spring in Jasonville, fair and fragrant. Duncan Potter, haberdasher, returning to his store from lunch this Saturday noon, became aware that he was whistling under his breath as he walked. He checked the whistle with a tolerant smile for himself and composed his face to graver lines. Yet spring still fluted in his heart.

Business was flourishing with Potter. The now rapid demobilization at the army cantonment down the river was sending a flow of men into his ready-to-wear clothing annex, all burning to change from khaki to "civies." And soon would come increasingly the homeward flow of troops from France. It looked like a good year ahead for Potter, enough to make any man, however sober-sided normally, tune his pipes to the vernal madness in the air.

Chris Hogan, the policeman on the Liberty Street beat, came sauntering along as Potter approached his door. Chris had dropped into the store several times of late to replenish certain small needs of his wardrobe, so Potter hailed him as of his own elect.

"Fine weather, Hogan. Couldn't be improved."

"It could not that, sir, an' keep your feet on the ground," grinned the man.

He paused irresolutely, as if there were something further he would say. But Potter had gone in. Hogan scratched his head thoughtfully and resumed his measured round.

In the haberdashery Potter noted that Mrs. June Carter, his very capable sales woman, was waiting on an elderly gentleman whom he recognized as Alonzo Manning, president of the Exchange National Bank, a Gibraltar among the financial institutions of the South. The haberdasher's heart gave a pleasant thump against his ribs—Manning's patronage was equivalent to a cachet of distinction on a shop.

Potter would have passed quietly to his desk in the rear, but through the archway leading to the annex he caught an urgent arresting gesture from young Billy Howe, his clothing salesman. He went in to him. Billy put his hand to his mouth and whispered elatedly:

"Know who it is in there, sir, with Mrs. Carter?"

"Yes," said Potter.

Billy continued: "He blew in here and looked my line over through his glasses like he was inspecting something in a museum. I started to trail along as guide, but he waved me down.

" 'If I see a pattern that appeals,' he says, 'I'll be glad to avail myself of your kind offices, young man.' "

"Did he buy? You are consuming time," said Potter.

Billy tried to hurry up. "Yes, sir. I'm coming to that. After a while he says: 'I've been reading Mr. Potter's advertisements. They have interested me. Ah, this invisible check—you may show it to me.'

"I did, and I'm a sinner, Mr. Potter, if it didn't fit him like his skin. The first suit! He fainted when I named the price, thirty-seven-fifty. When he came to, I started in to explain our profit system.

" 'Yes, yes,' he says. 'I've read about it. Twenty-Per-Cent. Potter. But do you know, young man, my tailor charges me fifty dollars for a plain business suit no better than this?'

"I said I didn't know, but I could guess——"

"Did he buy," repeated Potter relentlessly.

Billy's expression changed. "Yes, sir. But here's the hitch. He told me to charge it, and send it home."

"Well?"

"I didn't know what to say. Cash and carry—to the president of the Exchange National! I was looking for you any minute, and—and so I waited."

THE young fellow's eyes lowered before the gray scrutiny of his boss, and he did not see the sudden upcurling at the corners of the wide, expressive mouth that robbed the lean face of its severity.

"So you passed the buck to me. Very well, I'll take it. But don't try it on again, William. This business is run on a settled principle. It won't be changed for the mightiest man that walks in shoe leather."

Potter left him and went into the other store. An array of shirts was piled up on the counter adjacent to Mr. Manning.

"Forty-five dollars," he was saying with a gratified air. "Really, madam, I did not know that money nowadays could go so far. Ah—er—I should like to meet Mr. Potter."

"This is Mr. Potter now," smiled the saleswoman.

The banker turned and extended his hand. "My name is Manning. I'm connected with the Exchange Bank. I was passing, and it occurred to me to step in." He chuckled his good humor. "One step, at least, I don't regret. Ah, yes, madam, will you kindly see that these things are sent home to me? The young man in the other department has the address. The bill you may mail to the bank."

At a look from the merchant Mrs. Carter moved away, and he assumed charge of the customer.

"Have you taken the trouble to inspect my costs bulletin board?" he inquired blandly. "Those shirts there—I'd like you to know how I can price them as I do."

As he spoke he maneuvered Manning toward the board, a little way down from where they had been standing. The banker adjusted his glasses and studied the exhibit. Potter pointed out the invoice for the shirts. He explained his profit system in a few words.

"That is why," he finished, "you can buy a shirt in this shop for three seventy-five, that would cost you elsewhere in this town at this time from five to six dollars."

" 'According to what the traffic will bear,' " quoted Manning shrewdly.

"Exactly," agreed Potter. He went on lightly: "When I was a boy they used to drill it into me that a dollar saved is a dollar gained. It didn't take me long to learn that the saving entailed the sacrifice of some small part of my comfort or convenience. But after all there was my dollar gained. That fact overshadowed all the rest——"

"Ah!" It was applause from the banker, as much so as though he had struck his hands together.

"So," proceeded Potter, "in setting up this business I argued that every dollar of expense I could save would be a dollar I could pass on to my trade. Two big items I cut out at the start: the bookkeeping, and loss that charge accounts involve; and delivery, a tax on every sale whether the customer carries his bundle or does not. The result? Take, for example, these twelve shirts of yours—I'm not saying anything about that sack suit. You have saved at least fifteen dollars on the purchase. That, Mr. Manning, is money you have gained."

THE president of the Exchange Bank regarded the haberdasher in silence for a distinct period of time. His attitude had stiffened. "Humph!" he said at last. "Do you happen to bank with the Exchange, sir?"

"No. With the Jasonville National."

"We extend credit to responsible parties."

"A bank's business; a source of income. But"—Potter allowed one of his rare open smiles to illumine his face—"if I should drop in on your cashier and request the loan of eighty-two dollars without interest, and to be repaid at my convenience, would I get it?"

Eighty-two dollars was the sum total of the banker's bill. The application was obvious. He perceptibly unbent.

"You would not," he stated.

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"No exceptions to the rule?" persisted Potter.

The other threw out his hands in a gesture of surrender. "Caught!" he cried wryly. "Er—ah—would you—is it against your policy to accept a check?"

Potter laughed.

"That rule has its exceptions, Mr. Manning."

"Then I'll tote what I can of my plunder, and send for the rest."

"Send for it all," suggested Potter. And he added with sincerity: "Upon my word, sir, I had no idea that a person's own ruling could punish him."

The banker thawed out completely. With unaffected warmth he laid his hand on Potter's arm.

"I like a man who stands to his guns," he declared. "I want you to come in and see me. Are you a member of the Rotary Club?"

"I have not been solicited," said Potter.

"Then consider that you are solicited—now. We need men of your stamp. Ah—er—I will draw that check, I think."

While he was thus engaged, Mrs. Carter came forward to wrap up the shirts.

"In two packages, if you please, madam," requested the president over his shoulder. He finished writing the check, presented it, and reached for his purchase.

"You are not going to send?" asked Potter worriedly.

The old man's face broke into a web of humorous wrinkles.

"For the suit, yes. But not these. Not for a farm, sir. I intend," he discoursed as Potter walked with him to the door, "to set an example to the young fellows at the bank. I shouldn't be astonished if you saw some of them in here."

Saying this, and with a bundle tucked firmly under each arm, he stepped militantly out into the street. Mrs. Carter drew a breath of relief. Billy Howe, peering in from the annex, hissed at her:

"What do you know about that? Cash and carry for Mister Mazuma! Ha, Ha!"

II

ON WEDNESDAY of the following week Chris Hogan slipped into the haberdashery along toward closing time. Mrs. Carter's comely face lighted up with a friendly smile as she saw who it was. She had waited on him before, and she liked the big, homely, kindly patrolman. Chris, who had taken a swift survey of the premises and found that they two were alone, broached a question.

He got up and spoke. His voice was clear and dispassionate, and his words few.

"Do you expect the boss in, mum?"

"Not to-night. He is down-state at his Anderson store. It will be late when he gets back."

"Um," said Chris, and scratched his head. "He's a white man, is Mr. Potter. I been watchin' him." He hesitated curiously, and then, with evident resolve, continued. "I've that on my chest I'd like to get off it. Maybe you'll be showin' me some collars, mum, as a blind to the street while I'm talkin'."

Mrs. Carter concealed her surprise at this cryptic speech. She produced the collars, and the policeman while pretending to examine them spoke in a guarded tone.

" 'Tis better, perhaps, that you should be tellin' the boss than for me to be seen raggin' with him. It's about the new uniforms for the force, mum, the summer dress. The city will be advertisin' for bids pretty soon—it's overdue now, with the spring gettin' on as it is—an' I been mullin' over in my mind that if Mr. Potter could find a way to beat the game he'd be pullin' off a fair trick for himself, an' doin' a dum good turn for the force."

A germ of interest was planted in Mrs. Carter's breast. Anything that favored her employer found favor with herself.

"What game, Mr. Hogan?" she urged. "And you emphasize a doubt that he can beat it. Where does it lie?"

"Heh?" He stared at her, then grinned. "I get yer. You mean where's the nigger in the melon-patch. Listen, plaze. Last year I had to dig up forty-five iron men—dollars, beggin' your pardon—for these winter regimentals I'm wearin'; an' a tailor friend of mine says he could make it now—to-day, with everything gone up—for around thirty-five, an' play safe. That's for a single suit, mum. What do you s'pose he could have made two hundred suits for a year ago? There's that many of us on the force."

"Graft!" ejaculated Mrs. Carter.

"Plain pocket-pickin'!" amended Hogan bitterly. "I've run in many a dip with cleaner hands than the dirty bunch that's got the inside at City Hall, an' had it these five years gone. The Big Four, we call 'em. Three of 'em clothin' men, Jasonville people, an' the other—I'm not callin' names, but his is known, I'm thinkin', in every newspaper office in the burg. He carries Ward Eight in his vest pocket."

"And they don't expose him!" cried the woman hotly.

Hogan drew down an eye at her as he answered. "What's the use in stirrin' up a row so long as nobody kicks? If we kicked, we'd get canned. Um. The call for sealed proposals is a joke. It's all fixed beforehand. If an outsider has the gall to put in a bid—well, there's always steam in the kettle. You can do a whole lot with steam, an' fix your figgers afterward."

"I see," breathed Mrs. Carter. "I suppose the three clothing-houses share the work of making the uniforms."

"Like h—, like sin they do!" stuttered Chris, catching himself in the nick of time. "They let the contract to some sweat-shop up North. All the work they do is divvy on the profit. We pay the bill. God knows what it'll be this year," he concluded gloomily.

Mrs. Carter considered him thoughtfully. "Have they raised the pay of the police to meet the increased cost of living?" she asked.

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Chris laughed mirthlessly. "It hasn't come to my attention if they have. They're still talkin' about it, the council. Maybe they'll do it by Christmas, an' call it a present. Um. If Mr. Potter, now, could put over something on the clothes gang! It's that I'm chewin' on, mum. There'd be clean money in it for the likes o' him, an' the boys would have a hurrah comin'."

The saleswoman all at once became busy with her wares, and nudged Hogan's hand in the process.

"Some one is coming," she whispered. "Is there a way to help get the contract? Hurry!"

The policeman bent over the collars, critically selected half a dozen, and shoved them to one side. He spoke distinctly. "It may be as you say, mum, but I don't know. If I can see my way to it I'll call again. These collars is all I'll be takin' right now, I reckon."

Hogan paid for them, waited at his ease while they were being done up, and swung carelessly out of the shop.

WHEN Potter entered the store the next morning, Timothy Rugg was with him. The rotund "Cotton King" had come in on the night train from Atlanta and surprised his friend at the breakfast-table in the Grand Hotel.

"Got a bit of business with old Manning at the Exchange Bank," he had explained as he lowered himself into a chair. "To start the day right, Duncan," he chuckled, "I'll just match you to see who pays the breakfast check."

"So you know Manning?" Potter said, ignoring the challenge. "But of course. Men of millions flock together. I had an experience with him the other day."

He detailed the incident. A laugh rumbled up from the plump man's lowest vest button and found the air.

"By hokey," he exclaimed, "I'll ask the old boy where he gets his shirts, and see what he says. But look here, D. P. You did in ten minutes what it takes most men ten years to do—get next to Manning. He's the coldest proposition this side of Iceland. Ha, here's my fruit."

From the breakfast-table Rugg had accompanied Potter to the store, it being yet too early to see the banker. He shook hands with Mrs. Carter, and asked, following his usual formula with her:

"Well, little lady, how are tricks?"

"Fine," she smiled. "I hope it's the same with you."

Rugg wagged his head mournfully.

"I'm dying of dry-rot. Haven't had an excitement since that lightning change of stores last month. Can't you start something?"

She looked toward her employer, who was running over the mail at his desk.

"Perhaps I can, though Mr. Potter must finish it. And perhaps he won't."

"Duncan, come here while we have the place to ourselves! I've stepped on a mystery!" shouted Rugg.

Mrs. Carter shrank back with a small gesture of dismay. No one but the irrepressible Cotton King would have ventured to hail Potter in like manner. And for no one but Rugg would Potter have responded as he did. He left his mail and came to them with a clear brow.

"I've got a job for you, but I don't know what it is," proclaimed Rugg. He waved a chubby hand at the saleswoman. "The stage is yours, ma'am."

But Mrs. Carter did not play up to his humorous expectation. She quite seriously related Patrolman Hogan's talk with her, and waited gravely for comments. Rugg was the first to speak.

"Pretty small graft—a few thousands—but I suppose they think every little helps. I can't see, Duncan, where you come in, if they've got the thing sewed up as this chap Hogan says."

"I'm not sure that I wish to come in. It is stepping out of my line—" But Rugg caught him up.

"Puttees!" he jeered. It was an allusion to ten thousand pairs of army cordovans Potter had sold to college boys in November.

"Miracles don't happen twice to the same man," Potter retorted. "And there was no politics in that business. There is in this, and I'm not hankering to mix in. Yet to stand by and see these men robbed—" He addressed Mrs. Carter. "Who are these swindlers? Did Hogan say?"

"No, and I forgot to ask," she admitted, her cheek flushing. "Our talk was hurried."

A little frowning knot showed in the merchant's forehead. He was silent, casting the matter over in his mind. The woman spoke hesitantly.

"If I may offer a suggestion——"

"Of course, Mrs. Carter," assented Potter promptly.

"You probably have thought of it," she went on, "but there may be something in the law governing the letting of the contracts that will help us. These people have grown so bold that perhaps they have overstepped or ignored the law. There may be a way to expose them; and that, it seems to me, would stand out as a mighty good example of civic service to set before this town."

"By hokey, Potter, she has hit a high key!" cried Rugg admiringly.

Potter was looking intently at the young woman. "Anything else, Mrs. Carter?" he questioned.

"Yes, though this is not a suggestion; it's a business fact. Aside from other issues, if we beat this ring it means for this store two hundred new customers, and their families and friends."

"Bravo!" trumpeted Rugg. "Sentiment and commerce hand in hand. You score again, little lady."

Her use of the plural pronoun pleased Potter, though he needed no assurance of her loyalty to the business. He nodded assent, but he said only:

"We will wait and see if Hogan calls again."

HE was returning to his desk when Rugg stopped him.

"I'm off to Manning. Suppose I give him a hint of this? The old boy is secret as a clam. He may be able to suggest something."

Potter reflected a minute. He had not fully determined to undertake this enterprise. There were features of it that repelled him, and it involved considerable work and planning with, perhaps, only failure for his portion. Yet it was this thought of possible failure that now decided him. He had never acknowledged the word in his business processes, had deleted it from his lexicon. It should stand deleted.

"Very well. Speak to him," he said. This time he returned to his desk.

Rugg looked at Mrs. Carter, intending to lavish on her a triumphant grin. But her attention was not for him. Her eyes were following Potter, and they were luminous as midnight stars.

"H-m-m," he murmured to himself. And again "H-m-m," as he reached the street.

III

TIMOTHY RUGG did not get back to the store that day. A telegram—they pursued him wherever he went—started him off for Savannah. But he telephoned before leaving.

"The old boy is with you," he announced. "You will hear from him. And say, young fellow, I want to be there at the day-noo-mong. Get that? French. Let me know, for of course you'll put it over. If you don't—h-m-m! Well, so long."

Potter was pleased to know that Manning was interested, but he was not the man to wait for any one, once he had decided on a course. That afternoon he made a call on the business manager of the *Herald*. He advertised in the paper rather largely for one in his line, and his reception was assured.

"Look here, Baker," he began abruptly, "who runs this town?"

The manager's brows lifted. "The mayor and city council, I'm told," he said jocosely.

"You don't get me," Potter persisted. "I'll put it this way: suppose I want a favor from the city, something I'm not particularly anxious to have noised around. Who is the man to see?"

Baker's brows came down. "Oh! Why, I shouldn't be surprised if Bill Kent could help you."

"Kent? What's his business? Where can I find him?"

"He has an office in the Mercantile Building, though he isn't there much. He's around town most of the time."

Potter noted that Baker had passed up the first question. He did not press it. Instead he said, smiling as he rose:

"I guess that's all, and I'm in a hurry to-day. Some time—you understand—I might want to meet Mr. Kent. I just thought I'd ask——"

"Sure, sure. Just to make conversation. Drop in again when you are passing. Always pleased to see a good friend of the paper."

Returning to his store, Potter encountered Chris Hogan pausing on the corner in his rounds. The policeman sent a covert look at him, and would have let him pass without recognition had Potter allowed it. But he did not. He stopped and spoke to him.

"Don't shy off, man. Any one has the right to accost a policeman. I want the names of the Big Four. All of them. Write them down and leave it at the store. To-day."

It had taken less than ten seconds. Potter was half-way down the block when Hogan recovered himself.

"By gum, he's going to do it!" he muttered. "I knew he was a white man."

He nodded wisely to the street in general and strolled on. That night he

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ducked into the store and handed Mrs. Carter a sealed envelope. Potter was in the annex.

"For the boss," Chris whispered with a closed eye. "An' say, mum. Tell him they're goin' to advertise on Monday. Last year 'twas hidden away in the real-estate ads. This year, maybe, 'twill be buried in the death notices." With a grin for his own wit Chris took his departure.

THE next morning, Thursday, Potter was called to the telephone. It was President Manning.

"I wish to ask if you will be my guest at the weekly luncheon of the Rotary Club to-morrow. One o'clock."

"With pleasure," Potter responded. "Where do you meet?"

"In the Dutch Room of the Southern Hotel. If you will come by the bank, at five minutes of, I will be ready."

Friday, at the appointed time, he met the banker and they proceeded to the hotel. On the way Manning said in a casual tone:

"I've known Timothy Rugg for years. A good man. Irregular in his methods, perhaps, but dependable."

"He's straight as a string," said Potter tersely.

"Precisely. Ah—er—my attorney has been looking into the city ordinance. He thinks he has discovered something of interest to you. He is to meet us after lunch."

"That suits me," Potter replied, and asked no questions. Manning glanced at him approvingly. Here was a man whose tongue was not loose in his head.

They were late at the luncheon, it seemed. The Rotarians were seated, though they had not begun eating. As Manning and his guest appeared in the door, the company rose as one man.

"Gentlemen," said Manning sonorously, "I have the privilege of presenting Mr. Duncan Potter, of Jasonville and Anderson."

The company bowed in unison and silence, and the two were conducted to places reserved for them at the foot of the table. Potter began to perceive that this was some form of ordeal purposely planned for him. He was convinced of it when he caught sight of a reporter for the *Herald* snickering secretly over his notes. He accepted the situation equably, and listened to the conversation that sprang up immediately with the serving of the meal. Talk flowed around and near but never to him. Only Manning addressed him, and that not for some time.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am told that this contemptible petty thievery has been going on for years. Why have you permitted it?"

"The question before us to-day" he observed, "is whether or not the city should donate a site on the water-front up the river to the International Vending Company. It is the condition on which they offer to remove their plant here. The pay-roll is twenty thousand a month, and will be spent largely in Jasonville. There is something to be said for it, eh?"

"I am waiting to hear," Potter answered briefly.

They had arrived at the cigars, and the man in the chair was rapping for attention. He introduced the topic Manning had outlined, and asked for expressions on it. Speeches pro and con followed scatteringly about the table. Finally a man seated at Potter's right rose and delivered a passionate plea for the Vending Company. He glowingly pictured the benefit all classes of city trade would derive from that juicy pay-roll, and ended by saying that if Jasonville did not accept the offer it would be turning down a bag of gold on a silver platter. Some other municipality would grab it.

"Who was that last speaker?" Potter inquired of the banker.

"Allan Parker, of Parker Brothers."

"Ah?" said Potter. The man's name was on the list Hogan had handed in.

His reflections were disturbed by hearing his name called. The chair was requesting him to give his views on the matter in debate. Potter looked inquiringly at Manning.

"I am not a member," he objected.

The reply came in an entirely new tone. It was curt to incivility.

"Speak! You have a mind of your own, young man—or haven't you? Humph!"

"Oh," murmured Potter. "So that's the way of it."

He got up and spoke. His voice was clear and dispassionate, and his words few. To his mind, any business that came to a city with its hat out for alms was not to be appraised as a desirable acquisition. It was not standing on its legs securely. It limped. The present it offered on a silver platter might prove to be phony gold. In brief, if the Vending Company could not or would not buy or lease the land at a reasonable figure, let it limp on to the next town looking for a crutch—Jasonville would be well rid of it.

LAUGHTER and applause greeted him as he sat down. Men eyed him warmly across the table. Only Parker scowled. The question was put to vote, and was lost. The meeting adjourned. The Rotarians flocked about Potter and welcomed him as one of them. He took it quietly, but when he and Manning were in the street, he said to the banker:

"I'm pretty dense to-day, I reckon. I seem to have been made a member of this club. May I ask when it happened?"

Manning beamed. "When you made that speech you elected yourself. It's our way of doing things. You were on the right side of that proposition, yes, sir! But the result to you would have been the same had you argued for it. What we want to know is, has a man nerve, and has he views, and can he put his views in telling words. You did it. Now we will see what that lawyer has to say."

Potter recalled what Rugg had said of Manning—"a cold proposition"—and he smiled.

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IV

RACE was the misnomer of the banker's lawyer. He was a bulky, deliberate person who probably had never hurried for a train in his life. He greeted Potter ponderously, and explored him with a cold, analytic eye. Manning, who knew his ways as well as his worth, leaned back from his desk and said:

"Well, John, let's have it. We'll call the preliminaries over. I've acquainted you with my friend's purpose. You have discovered something that will help him. Let's have it."

"You will permit me to correct that statement, Alonzo," observed the lawyer. "I intimated to you over the telephone that it might interest Mr. Potter. Whether it will help depends wholly on himself."

"All right, all right," assented the banker hastily. "Let us have it."

Mr. Race drew to him a volume of the city statutes he had laid on the desk when entering, placed his glasses on his nose, found his mark in the book, opened to it, stiffened imposingly erect in his seat, and proceeded to read with forensic solemnity the law governing the letting of contracts. At a point in his reading he paused, and with lifted finger remarked to Potter:

"This, sir, is the clause that may discover interest for you: '*And immediately thereafter*'—that is, after the ultimate hour named for acceptance—'*the said sealed proposals shall be opened in the presence of the bidders or their duly constituted representatives: or, failing this, in the presence of any three witnesses of known good repute who may be called in for the purpose.*' "

Potter returned the attorney's fixed gaze. He nodded presently.

" 'And immediately thereafter.' Yes, that interests me, Mr. Race. I'm obliged to you."

"The rest is not unimportant, sir," advanced the other magisterially. "It provides against a contingency."

"I noticed it." Potter suddenly straightened. He plumped a question at the two. "Gentlemen, I am told that this contemptible petty thievery has been going on for years. Why have you permitted it?"

"Eh? What?" President Manning also sat up straight. The attorney, on his part, stared at the haberdasher blankly. An astounding question indeed!

"Don't you know the men?" demanded Potter.

Manning rallied first. His white head went up with a hint of haughtiness. But as he searched the younger man's face and found there only the reflection of an earnest purpose, he permitted himself to relax in his chair again.

"I do not know them," he said. "Possibly Kent is one; they say he can deliver votes when wanted. But the others—" He shrugged. "I am very deeply engrossed in the conduct of this er—ah—institution. I have time for little else."

"And you, sir?" Potter looked at the attorney. He added quickly: "Pardon my bluntness. I'm not presuming to sit in judgment on better men than myself. I am simply desirous to know why it is left to an inconspicuous stranger to uncover a rotten spot in the city while citizens of distinction pass it over."

Manning directed a glance at the man of law. It was as much as to say, "We are in a hole; get us out of it." But Race held his peace.

"Well, I know the men," stated Potter. "That is, I have their names." He took a paper from his pocket, and read from it. "William Kent, Lowe & Richards, Abram Pincus, Parker Brothers."

"Ha! Allan backed the Vending Company!" Manning's voice was low and sibilant, expressive of a sudden great distrust.

Race broke his silence. He had fallen back in his chair, had become all at once curiously human.

"I have no defense. Manning there has answered for me, for all of us. We are too absorbed in our own affairs to spare the time to public duties. We leave it to the other fellow—in this case, yourself, sir. To put it baldly, there is no money in it for us. I am ashamed to say it, but my presence here at this conference is due—or was—solely to the fact that I am Mr. Manning's retained attorney."

"Good Heavens, gentlemen, don't think I am preaching to you!" cried Potter, smitten with dismay. "I'm not! I've been as slack in these things as any one. It is only because this mean little steal has been so directly brought to my attention that I'm taking action. To be as frank as yourself, Mr. Race, I'm tempted to side-step it, only—well, somehow I can't. And your help is a big stiffener to me. I need it."

Race looked at Manning. "I cancel my fee in this case, Alonzo," he said.

"And I," declared the banker, "am going to see that we have a house-cleaning in the Rotary Club. We've been thinking only of the material advancement of the city. There's another side. We will go into it."

Potter made ready to leave. He had been thinking ahead as Manning talked. He appealed to Race.

"Isn't there a way to find out to just what person these contracts have been let year after year? Which one or ones of the group?"

"The records in the city treasurer's office should show," Race apprised him.

"Could they be had without causing remark?"

"Possibly. Do you wish them immediately?"

"By Monday. I'm told they will advertise the bid then. If so, I shall leave for Baltimore that day."

He shook hands and walked to the door. Here he paused.

"I hope it is not necessary to say that I'm not after this contract for profit. I hope that is plain to you." He smiled faintly and went out.

"John," drawled the banker with a dry chuckle, "when Tim Rugg was in here the other day he said that this man Potter was a er—ah—'good horse to back!' What do you think?"

The lawyer's countenance did not change. "On a sporting proposition," he anounced judicially, "I opine that Timothy Rugg is generally right."

THE city's bid for sealed proposals came out on Monday, March third, and was distinguished by its modesty of space and position in the paper. It occupied but little more than two inches, and was placed at the bottom of a column of railroad timetables. Proposals would be received up to twelve noon, March tenth. Delivery by April twenty-fifth. Specifications to be had at the city treasurer's office.

"Only one week! They must feel sure of themselves," thought Potter. A line caught his eye, and he reached for his hat. "*The city in its discretion reserves the right to reject any or all bids.*"

Potter went to see John Race. "What will this do to me?" he asked, pointing to the line in question.

"A mere form," Race assured him. "To safeguard the city in case all bids should be unreasonably high." He grudgingly allowed his face to relax. "Has an honest look, that line."

"It has, and I'll stand on it," said Potter. "They won't have reason to reject my bid. Have you that data for me? I'm leaving at eleven."

"Yes, and a copy of the specifications."

"Oh! I'd overlooked that," confessed Potter, taken aback. "But it would have given me away if I had asked for one. Thank you, Mr. Race. You are a big help."

The lawyer permitted his features to slacken still further. He handed him the papers, and wished him good luck as he left.

IT was a short, busy morning for Potter. "See if you can get Mr. Rugg on the long-distance," he bade Mrs. Carter. "Tell him to meet me without fail as I pass through to-night. You may hint to him that it's about the contract."

He devoted himself to a study of the data Race had furnished him. The result was a few carefully penciled lines on a sheet of letter-paper. He meditated on this a while. Would it be better, after all, to give it to the *Herald*? He decided against it. There might be a leak, and anyway the early morning of the tenth would be too soon. It must be timed to the minute. He folded the paper into an envelope and placed it in his pocket.

Mrs. Carter came to him and reported on Rugg. "He will be there," she said.

"Good! Another thing. I want a dozen boys here this day week, rain or shine. See if Howe can get them, please."

"We will have them," she stated simply.

He regarded her a moment silently. Then: "I am leaving you in charge—as usual. That means I needn't worry. I am off now to see Mr. Manning. I won't be back. Good-by."

"Success," she wished him.

"Thanks," he held her hand a breath longer than was needful. "Take care of yourself," he said, and abruptly turned away.

She watched him go, the color flooding her face. He had never spoken to her quite so personally before.

Potter arrived in Baltimore Tuesday night. He knew exactly whom he wished to see, and he did not wait until morning to get in touch with him. Time was the essence of this job. He called up his man on the telephone, stated his business, and the pressure of it, and in five minutes was in a taxi on his way to the residence of Mr. Jonas Kitchell, of Kitchell, Higgins & Haynes, clothing manufacturers.

Potter told his story briefly, omitting the sensational features.

"Now," he concluded, "I'll land this contract, Mr. Kitchell, if your figures are right. Give me rock-bottom the first time. It's cash, you understand. Half down, remainder on delivery."

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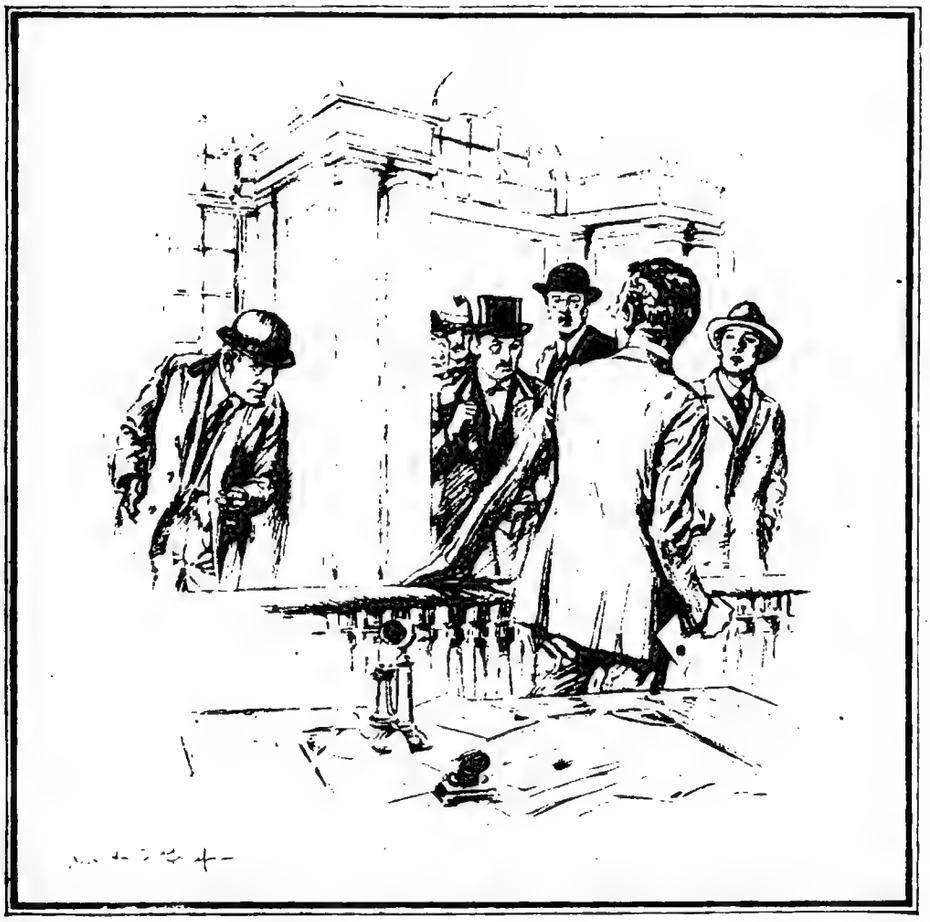

"Hello! What's all this about, gentlemen?" inquired the treasurer.

The manufacturer had listened to him keenly. He said: "I happen to know that Schwartz & Lowenstein in Philadelphia have been making these uniforms dating back to nineteen fifteen."

Potter stirred slightly. "Sweat shop?" he queried.

"Yes. They seem to have a hold on this Jasonville business."

"They have. I'm going to break it," said Potter sententiously.

Kitchell frowned. He was studying the specifications Potter had laid before him.

"Hum. There's something strange in this," he submitted. "This order ought to be under way now. Delivery in six weeks! Look here, sir. This bid is framed to discourage proposals."

"Can you fill the order?" snapped Potter. "That's the question up now."

"We could, but——"

"Mr. Kitchell," broke in Potter, "this proposition admits of no buts, ifs or ands. If you can't take it, or won't, I'll find a house that will. I want your answer by noon to-morrow. Shall I have it, or shall I not?"

The manufacturer thought an instant. "You shall have it," he decided.

"Thanks and good night," said Potter.

He had the answer at noon. It was "Yes." The price was a little high, but the circumstances gave it warrant. And Potter, with his margin of profit to draw on as he chose, could afford it.

He closed with Kitchell. Then he went out and caught a train for Philadelphia. He had planned to do this overnight, after his talk with Kitchell. Late that day he wired both Manning and Rugg. To the former he said:

"It looks well. See you Saturday."

To Rugg he said:

"Stopping off at Atlanta Friday. Have printing ready."

V

MONDAY morning, March tenth, at eleven o'clock, Timothy Rugg chuckled fatly as he watched Potter handing out bunches of handbills to the crowd of youngsters assembled in the alleyway back of the store. Rugg had brought the bills over from Atlanta Sunday night, after a strenuous three-day session with a frantic boss printer whose men, following the prevailing fashion, had walked out on Wednesday in a city-wide strike. Potter, arriving in Atlanta Friday, was dismayed to find the work he had entrusted to Rugg untouched. It looked as if an essential part of his program was to fall through. But Rugg was not dismayed.

"Go on home," he had said. "I'll buy this printer boss body, soul and breeches, and make him run the job off himself." And he did, at a price he kept hidden in his own consciousness. Now he was enjoying the first fruits of his victory, and with more to come. Printed in brilliant purple, the bills read:

? ? ? ?

POLICE UNIFORMS

Who Got the Contract in 1916?
Ask Abram Pincus

Who Got the Contract in 1917?
Ask Henry Lowe

Who Got the Contract in 1918?
Ask Allan Parker

Who Gets the Contract in 1919?
Ask Bill Kent

When he was through distributing the bills, Potter detained a bright-looking boy, and bade the rest scatter through the business streets. To his special Mercury he handed an extra quarter and said:

"Make a bee-line for the Mercantile Building. Leave half a dozen at the door of William Kent on the third floor. Don't go in. Rap on the door, then run for the street. Jump!"

AT ELEVEN-FORTY Mr. Manning bustled into the store, a handbill clutched in his fingers. His age and dignity had dropped from him for the time. Rugg happened to be the first person he encountered.

"Hey, there, Tim Rugg! Some day, this!" he bubbled. "We're all backing the same horse, eh? And going to win! Where's Potter?"

Rugg, a little devil of mischief dancing in each blue eye, replied:

"Having his nails manicured. Bet you a ten-spot to fifty cents, Alonzo, that Bill Kent makes a monkey of Duncan. Are you on?"

"By Jove, I'll take—er—ah—umph! You go to the dickens, Tim Rugg. Ah, there he is now!"

Manning was pushed by the Cotton King to meet Potter, who was coming in from the annex.

"What d'ye think, young man?" he hailed. "We've had word that the Vending Company is coming anyhow. Going to buy the land! I believe, 'pon my soul, that speech of yours did the business. Anyway, you're getting credit for it."

"Oh, it wasn't that," Potter demurred. "They simply recognized that the old game of getting something for nothing stopped with the war. There are others who have got the same lesson to learn."

"Bill Kent!" crowed the banker. "Ah—er—I've fixed it with the Rotarians. Twenty of them pledged to be on hand. Best men in town. Picked 'em myself. But, by Jove, this is going to give 'em a shock." He waved the handbill airily. "It's a bomb in the club."

Potter put on his hat. Flanked by Manning and Rugg he set out for the city hall. Mrs. Carter stood by the door to see them off. Potter looked at her as he passed. She did not speak. It was not necessary. He knew that her whole will to triumph was his.

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Chris Hogan came along as they moved down the street. Potter nodded to him. Chris saluted, grinned jubilantly, and plodded on.

It was five minutes to twelve by the official tower clock as Potter and his companions mounted the city-hall steps. Mounting them on the farther side of the building, almost at the same instant, was a squad of rather fine specimens of Jasonvilie's citizenry. They wore the Rotarian button in their coats.

At three minutes to twelve Potter, alone, entered the city treasurer's office on the ground floor. Apparently he had trespassed on a scene of some agitation. A chunky man of broad, flat countenance, ensanguined now with passion, was standing on the outer side of the rail that intervened between him and a lank, pasty-faced person who nervously twirled a pencil in his lean fingers. One of Potter's handbills lay upon the rail. The chunky man was pounding it with his fist as though it held a spark of life he had not succeeded in extinguishing. The tall man was speaking earnestly.

"I swear, Bill, I don't know anything about it. The records are open to search, of course, but I don't remember any one——"

He left off suddenly to glower at Potter. He was standing a little way off in quiet scrutiny of the man who, as he had hoped and planned, would be forced into the open through the simple agency of the flimsy bit of newsprint that lay beneath his irate hand—Bill Kent, ward boss and petty pillager of the city's guardians!

"What can I do for you?" the treasurer flung at the intruder.

Potter advanced to him.

"I wish to hand in this bid on police uniforms."

Kent dextrously removed the dodger from the rail to his pocket in a single motion and retired to a neighboring window embrasure. Here he jabbed an unlighted cigar in his mouth and waited. The treasurer cast a glance at the clock on the wall.

"A little more, and you'd been too late," he growled.

"I had that in mind, Mr. Drake," said Potter mildly.

"Huh. What's your name—please?"

The haberdasher smiled at the belated courtesy. "Duncan Potter. You will find it on the bid."

Kent stirred in his corner. His eyes gleamed with discovery.

"The cut-rate boob!" he muttered, and listened tensely.

"Well," said Drake, "you'll hear from it if it's low. The city may reject them all."

He turned away, but Potter remained where he was. The tower clock was booming out the hour. The sound of many feet poured in from the corridor outside. Manning and Rugg entered. The Rotarians followed. John Race at their head. Bill Kent whirled about, stared, and withdrew yet further into his window niche.

"Hello! What's all this about, gentlemen?" inquired the treasurer in a suddenly emulsified voice. He recognized many of the visitors. They were men not to be lightly considered. But it was Potter who answered him.

"We are waiting for the bids to be opened," he said suavely.

"What? I have just informed you——"

"Yes, but you were in error there," Potter calmly interrupted. "The law prescribes that bids shall be accepted up to a stated hour, and *immediately thereafter* shall be opened in the presence of the bidders. Immediately, Mr. Drake, does not mean a future time. It means *now*, and you have heard the clock. It is after twelve."

"But—why—oh, look here, now," stammered the official. "The other bidders are not present."

John Race stepped forward. He spoke with astounding briskness.

"What's the use of all this, Drake? You know the law. If the bidders or their representatives are not present, three responsible witnesses will do. I think you can discover them in this room if you look. Mr. Potter is a bidder. Alonzo Manning is his surety. You will find Mr. Potter's proposal drawn in due form. He demands compliance with the law."

The treasurer, under fire of Bill Kent's eyes, made a last stand.

"It's the law, yes. But it is the custom to wait——"

Potter interrupted again.

"We are going to change the custom. It is time. I am just back from Philadelphia. I talked with a friendly lieutenant of police, told him how the force here was being robbed. Through channels of his own this man learned"—Potter paused, for it was news to most present he was about to give out—"he learned, this man, that Schwartz & Lowenstein are right now working on the summer uniforms for the Jasonville police from last year's measurements."

A wisp of straw falling to the floor could have been heard as he ceased. Then some wag called out:

"My, my! What a hurry!"

"Who is going to lose his wad?" called another.

"Ask Bill Kent," came a chorus.

But Mr. Kent was no longer with them. While all eyes were on Potter he had quietly evaporated through the open window into the prospect beyond. Manning spoke.

"Somebody is going to face a grand jury for this. Drake, produce the bids." His voice was compelling.

The treasurer, shaken and shaking, went to his safe and brought forth the proposals. There were but three. He opened them under the concentrated gaze of the company.

"Read the figures," commanded Manning. Drake, in a half whisper, complied.

"Parker Brothers, fifty-one fifty. Abram Pincus, forty-nine. Lowe & Richards, fifty-two seventy-five."

"It's Abe Pincus's turn again," laughed some one.

"Now Potter's bid," ordered Manning.

"Thirty-three dollars."

"Too low. Rejected!" mocked a man.

A laugh went up. Timothy Rugg shouted high above the babel as he pounded his friend on the back:

"What's the three dollars for, you unconscionable robber?"

The noise ceased.

"My profit," said Potter. "Ten per cent.—for this occasion only. It goes to the Police Pension Fund."

The Rotarians lifted their voices in thunderous accord. "What's the matter with Ten-Per-Cent. Potter?" they demanded.

A thin voice from one of them anticipated the conventional reply.

"Ask Bill Kent!" it squeaked.

A. S. M. Hutchinson

THOSE of EVERYBODY'S readers who are familiar with "Once Aboard the Lugger," "The Happy Warrior," and "The Clean Heart," will welcome the news that the author, A. S. M. Hutchinson, has thought better of his decision, made when war duties claimed all his attention, never to write again.

For six years now there has been nothing new from Mr. Hutchinson. He was much too busy earning a captain's commission in the B. E. F., a rank that he attained by successive promotions after enlisting as a private. Now that his active service and a subsequent illness are behind him he has once more turned to the writing of fiction, and his newest, most mature and most important novel, "If Winter Comes," which, in the author's own words, "is streets ahead of anything I have ever done before," will first be published serially in EVERYBODY'S, beginning in January.

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A. S. M. Hutchinson

Mr. Hutchinson writes the sort of story that one sits up nights to read. His plot is always absorbing, his characters and situations unforgetable. We promise a little foretaste of "If Winter Comes" later. Meanwhile we announce, for the benefit of Hutchinson admirers of long standing and urge upon the notice of all other fiction readers desirous of a bowing acquaintance with a writer worth knowing, the appearance of a complete short story, "Some Talk of Alexander," in EVERYBODY'S, for November.

It is unfair to expect in a short story the breadth of perspective and variety of character and incident that have made Hutchinson novels such notable successes. However, this unusual story of a spineless younger son of a family bent on "getting on" and of the electric reaction of love upon his stodgy, self-sufficient character will provide a taste of the author's power.

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The woman dropped to her knees with an impulsive exclamation of pity and drew the frightened child to her heart.

The Lallapaloosa

By Wilbur S. Boyer

Here old friend Johnnie Kelly, the public school incorrigible, discovers that wonder of wonders, a teacher who is a "peacherino" and a "reglar feller." Among the worth-while bad boys of current literature Johnnie keeps his seat, and cuts up with a charm all his own.

THE hands of the school clock indicated ten minutes past one. Along the third-floor corridor raced Johnnie Kelly with weary legs and doubting heart. What punishment for being late would be decreed by his teacher, Mr. Daniel Parks? To recompense him Johnnie had not even the thrill of successful adventure. When he had bolted down Amsterdam Avenue after the fire-engines with the rest of the crowd, visions of raging flames and billows of smoke, of hair-raising rescues to witness and burned people to enjoy, had spurred on his spidery legs long after his less persistent comrades had given up and started back for the school building.

He alone of all Public School 199, Manhattan, New York City, had reached the scene of action, only to find the remains of a burned hair sofa in the gutter and a small boy amplifying to an open-mouthed group of companions the meager details. None of the crowd belonged to School 199, the firemen were gone, and the whole thing was a fizzle. Having run his heart out for thirty blocks, hopes high of witnessing a thriller, the thirteen-year-old Johnnie had not been stirred to interest by the bragging of a notoriety-seeking youngster.

Straight for Room 306 the auburn-topped Kelly staggered, breathing like a spent fire-horse.

"Boy, will you come here a minute?"

It was a woman's pleasant voice that brought him to a halt. In the doorway of 305 stood a bright-faced young lady not quite as tall as he; a new teacher, Johnnie was sure, because the mean old fuss that had occupied the room a few days before had reported him for turning handsprings in the hall. The new one had a hand protectingly on the shoulder of a forlorn urchin from sunny Sicily, and smiled encouragement as Johnnie eyed her sharply.

"You see," she said, as he came forward suspiciously—he was always suspicious of teachers—"I can't leave my class, and Tony wants to wash his face and hands. Don't you, Tony?"

"Yare," responded the seven-year-old specimen unenthusiastically; "wan-a you wash-a me yourseluf."

"But Miss Bouck can't go with you, Tony; but—but— What is your name?" she asked Johnnie. Johnnie told her. "But Johnnie, here, will show you just where to wash. You'll do that for Miss Bouck, won't you, Tony dear?"

TONY dear had objections. He sniffled, and big tears began to irrigate the soil on his face. He rubbed the drops away with a grimy hand, producing a wonderful cubist effect that delighted Master Kelly immensely until it was evident from a shake of her head that Miss Bouck did not want such an exhibition of joy in the presence of the child. Tony clung to teacher's skirt. She cuddled him, however, into submission.

"Johnnie, don't let him put those—those hands on top of the sanitary drinking-fountain."

"It won't hurt him," puffed Johnnie—he had not yet caught his wind—"I've done it lots o' times."

"What? And people drink there afterward?"

"Sure. 'Tain't the same water."

The diminutive teacher of Room 305 changed the subject and gave Kelly his orders.

Five minutes later he brought his charge back. She was still controling the class from the open doorway.

"I done the best I kin with his clothes on, Miss Bouck," apologized the assistant, "but the dirt's crawled into the little holes an' I can't coax it out, no matter how hard I whistle."

"What?" A smile of delight lit up her face.

"I mean whistlin' is just as good as plain water."

Soft and catchy was her laugh, and Johnnie laughed too. He could not explain how he knew it, but she was laughing *with* him, instead of *at* him, as most people did. And the room windows were

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plainly reflected in her big brown eyes—he looked there long enough to note that.

"Then we must get some soap, Johnnie," she declared, including him so adroitly by her manner as well as her speech that Johnnie felt a thrill of pleasure.

Miss Bouck examined Tony's neck and shook her head slowly. She surveyed her pupils in the tiny seats. In a school of fifty classes and two thousand cosmopolitan children, even in a select neighborhood, there are some dregs. The "1-A's" in Number 199 had been divided—at the earnest solicitation of the senior teacher of the grade—so that the novice had about

"Ef he no clean-a-noff for you, clean-a-heem yourself." And she marched from the room.

half of her fifty infants drawn from the cheaper tenements of the district.

"Are all foreign children as—as queer as these, Johnnie?"

This was an extraordinary question. No other teacher had ever consulted Master Kelly. She must be from a different mold.

"You mean wops an' kikes?"

"'Wops and kikes!'" she repeated. "What do you mean?"

"Dagoes and sheenies, o' course," replied Johnnie, gazing at this queer kind of pedagog, and his study opened his eyes to the wavy brown hair and warm pink cheeks.

The teacher stepped nearer. "Johnnie, you will not laugh at me when I tell you I'm very, very green."

"You're Irish, too!" cried the delighted boy, holding out his hand. "Put it there!"

She took his hand good-humoredly. "No, I mean I'm from Schoharie County—the country—and there are lots of New York words that I do not understand."

"Dagoes is—is ginneys—Eyetalians," he explained; "and sheenies is Yiddishers. But some on 'em is as clean as y— as me."

Her quiet laugh was contagious and inviting. It made Johnnie comfortably at ease. He wanted her to keep on laughing, and looking at him so.

"Most of them is as good as me," he added loyally, for his big warm heart knew no nationality, no creed. It included wops and kikes as well as micks; and he was as ready to discover humor in one race as in another. "I'm laughed at meself in school, you know," he declared, though he did not admit how the experience hurt, "so I kin laugh at the wops, s'long as I ain't mean about it."

"Will folks laugh at me for being countrified?" she asked, partly in earnest.

"Not if you don't try to steal second. Just hug your base an' let the other batters shove you around."

"You certainly puzzle me with your language," she admitted. "I don't know what you are talking about."

"Never mind," said Johnnie; "I'll come over some afternoon, if you'll let me, and learn yer. But you won't never git laughed at. Good-lookers kin get away with anythin'."

The pretty teacher laughed and blushed at the compliment.

Johnnie contemplated the closed door of 306, across the hall—his own classroom. "Say, Miss Bouck, won't you gi' me a pass tellin' Mr. Parks how you kep' me to help you?"

Miss Bouck's eyes narrowed wisely. "You rascal!" said she. "You want me to get into trouble?"

"Honest Injun, didn't you hold me up?" demanded Johnnie.

"I'll say you were late and I made you later. Will that do?" She made the proposition mischievously, and he was quick to take advantage of her mood.

"Ah, come on; be a sport," he coaxed. "Please!"

"Will you promise to come over this afternoon and wash with soap and water before the class, to show them how?"

"Sure!" agreed Johnnie quickly, for it promised a holiday from lessons.

Thus it was that about an hour later Johnnie peeled off coat, tie and collar, and rolled up his sleeves before fifty gaping youngsters occupying the little hinged seats in the 1-A room. He soaped himself until he looked like a cotton-boll, and splashed and sputtered water in a wide circle around him; but the height of loyalty was reached when he allowed the lady with the big, soft eyes to pour kerosene on his hair and passed around the room for certain delinquent ones to sniff.

"You see," Johnnie explained after school, his head over the basin in the men-teachers' room at the end of the hall, and Mr. Daniel Parks's powerful hands strenuously working to shampoo the odor from the carroty bristles, "they shy at bein' clean, like me at the mectric system—don't ketch on a-tall, an' can't see no use of it."

"We all prefer to walk in trodden paths,"

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observed the teacher half to himself, and with a dextrous twist he pushed the hero's head under the running water and held it there in spite of frantic struggles.

Johnnie came up gasping yet unresentful, his thoughts too pleasant to be drowned even by such treatment.

"Say, I wonder if she t'inks a feller washes like that ev'ry day!" The corners of Johnnie's mouth dropped comically. "But, gee!"—wiping the soap from his eyes—"I'd do it again for her!"

"Why for Miss Bouck particularly?"

"Huh! Ain't she a looloo?" Johnnie paused in surprise at his instructor's lack of acuteness.

"I don't know. What is a looloo?"

"Ah! You're on!" grinned the youth, rubbing his face until the freckles stood out like splotches of butter. "Why don't they git her kind to teach us big ones? We'd all be good fer *her*. Jist t'ink how we gotter go into Old Sally Primton's room twicet a day, and she with a face like a dried prune!"

"Please, Johnnie, don't let people think I teach you such language. You will shame me before a superintendent some day."

"Tag, I'm it. But I'll can it. Anyway, she's a lallapaloosa!" And the boy wondered why the teacher shook his head hopelessly.

PRETTY teachers were not a novelty to Johnnie. At the age of six he had had one, but she spent much time in front of the mirror in her locker door, and she always held her head too high for Johnnie ever to get a good look into her eyes. Again in his seven years' school career he had had another good-looking teacher; but whenever she opened her mouth her words did not sound pretty; she talked too much in the language of the boys on the block. Miss Bouck, on the other hand, looked a fellow in the eye, and all her words were nice words. And pretty! It was better than an ice-cream soda just to get a good look at her face.

Johnnie went home pleased with the whole world. So high in the clouds were his thoughts that he failed to tease a passing Chinaman, didn't throw a ripe tomato at an organ-grinder, and never so much as turned his head when a dirty little street Arab followed him for two blocks vocalizing variations on the phrase, "Red-header-titcher-Irish-pet!" Had he condescended to turn, he would have recognized the resentful Tony.

At half-past eight the next morning he slipped past the monitors at the foot of the stairs and hurried to the novice's room. His suit was carefully brushed, the toes of his red shoes freshly polished—bother the heels!—and his hair, sopping wet, was plastered down carefully in front. His top-knot still stood up like a shaving-brush, for of course he could not see that in the family mirror. He had got away with his gorgeous red Sunday tie without his mother's catching him, and now he stopped on the stairway to put it on.

Hardly did he exchange greetings with his new friend before Mr. Parks's voice boomed in the doorway: "Well, Miss Bouck, how fares the battle?"

Johnnie eyed his preceptor doubtfully. There was reason for any uneasiness that swept through Johnnie's mind, for Mr. Parks was big, athletic, forceful, and—most important—unmarried.

The boy watched a flush mount the cheeks of the 1-A teacher.

She was startled, but recovered and, smiling, reported—"Thank you, the enemy are reduced to a handful, but that handful seems firmly entrenched."

She surveyed the little ones before her, and her smile vanished. Johnnie followed her gaze. There was many a sweater in lieu of underwear and coat; for a sweater is the garment that can be worn longest without falling apart, and no one thinks of washing it. One youngster wore the top of a pink pajama suit, while another sported a swallow-tailed coat, the sleeves doubled over themselves until the cuffs touched the armpits. The tails were tied around the waist and held there by a lady's glass-bead buckle.

Johnnie wrinkled his nose in disgust, but straightened it out when he caught sight of the strange expression akin to the tender look sometimes bestowed upon him by his mother.

"Tony Crito, come here, dear," she requested gently.

Out stepped a pair of man's amputated breeches. Six inches of suspender over the shoulder of a ragged green sweater held the nether garment up under the armpits of a frowsy, beady-eyed Italian of seven, so one could just see the white strings wound around the tops of his dilapidated shoes. It was Johnnie's friend of the day before. She turned him around slowly to inspect this new regalia. That this was poor judgment was apparent at once. Confidence in the frail threads still striving to hold the back suspender button was, to Johnnie's mind, much misplaced, a d seeing by a gap in the rear elevation what would be the result of the impending catastrophe, he breathed a sigh of relief when she hastily directed the tenant of the trousers to a front seat and addressed her remarks to him there. "Tony, I fear you have not taken a bath."

"Yes-a ma'am," whined Tony.

"But you don't look as if you had. Did you get into the bathtub?"

"No can use-a da bathtub."

"Why not?"

He hung his head. Johnnie, who had started inquiries of a small urchin in a front seat, paused to explain behind the back of his hand: "Lots o' the ginneys use the tub for a coalbin," and Tony's silence was a confession.

"TELL your mother to use a basin," suggested Miss Bouck.

"No gotta da basin," blubbered the child.

"Use anything," said teacher desperately.

"She *did* bath me! She *did* bath me!" wailed Tony.

"How did your mother bathe you?"

The urchin explained, his voice rising from a mere whisper to a howl as he stared at the big man scowling down upon him, and there percolated into his mind a horrible suspicion regarding the significance of this ogre's presence: "She put-a me on der floor o' der kitchen. She t'row-a der pail o' wart' on-a me, den—den—she sweep-a out da kitch!"

Mr. Parks laughed aloud; but to Kelly's surprise the woman, cognizant only of the horror-stricken face of the infant, dropped to her knees with an impulsive exclamation of pity and drew the frightened child to her breast, soothing him with soft, inarticulate syllables that only she and the child comprehended.

Open-mouthed, thrilled, stood Johnnie. Then, a glance revealing that his own teacher had slipped out, Master Kelly unceremoniously fled.

THURSDAY morning Johnnie, on the pretense of sharpening pencils, was again enjoying the company of the sweet lady in the 1-A room. He had just found out from the roll-book that her first name was Helen when, notwithstanding the regulation forbidding visitors in a classroom without the permission of the principal, an indignant Sicilian reached the door, dragging behind her Tony Crito and his wonderful trousers. The woman herself would have attracted more than passing notice, for, to impress teacher, she had arrayed herself in a pink opera-cloak and green headgear modeled upon the classic lines of the flower-pot inverted.

"Titcher," exploded this apparition, "Tony—me hees sister-law—hees brudder my man—he say you tell-a heem he no clean."

"He should wash every day," was the evasive answer.

Helen took the youngster by the chin and, gingerly turning his face, pointed to unmistakable discolorations.

"No dirt," insisted the relative; "he clean-a like-a me," a statement undeniable.

"Yes, dirt," declared Helen desperately.

"No-o-o!" whined the other in a half-crying falsetto. "It no come off—that color of hees skin."

"It will most certainly come off if you use soap and try hard enough," said Miss Bouck decisively.

Sister-law turned her back upon the teacher and wrinkled up her nose in disgust. "Ef he no cleen-a-noff for you, cleen-a heem yourself." And she marched from the room.

Johnnie's jaw set, his fists clenched. Here was a task for the Irish. He took two strides after her—and found his way blocked by the flushed, smiling Helen.

"Never mind, Johnnie, 'Cleen-a heem yourself.' That was funny." She paused, her face brightening. "Why not?" And Kelly found her contemplating him. "Not I, of course," with a laugh, "but you! Ask Mr. Parks if you may give one of my boys a bath."

Mr. Parks responded with alacrity, coming over himself to superintend the job, though the messenger insisted vehemently that it was not necessary.

"Johnnie," said Mr. Parks, "we'll clean this boy." Johnnie knew that "we" meant Johnnie Kelly. "Take him to the men-teachers' room at the end of the hall!"—a howl from the dark-skinned brother-in-law. "You'll find soap and towels in my locker where they were the other day. I'll send a boy out for a scrubbing-brush."

"Save your change," said Johnnie; "there's a scrub-brush in the janitor's pail under the hall-sink."

"No, no!" cried Helen in alarm. "That's a floor-brush."

"I won't hurt it," promised Johnnie; but she prevailed.

After some coddling she succeeded in

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coaxing Tony to submit to a bath. However, it was with the affront of the opera-cloaked visitant rankling in his breast that Kelly led to the bath the quaking Tony. This was not cleaning up the enemy in the sense Johnnie desired, but it was service for the pretty teacher.

Some time later Johnnie returned, his clothes somewhat moist. His face assumed a puzzled expression at sight of the two pedagogs in the hallway busily talking.

"Kin I have some needle and t'read?" he asked in a stage-whisper, and seeing the look of inquiry in his preceptor's face, he added: "I had to cut the clothes offen the kid."

"What?" exclaimed the man incredulously.

"That's straight. They sews 'em up for the winter, and peel when the robins come."

He obtained the needle and thread without further parley.

At length down the hall came Johnnie Kelly, urging on a reluctant figure in commodious trousers. And they were safe trousers now; because on that one dangerous suspender button Johnnie had used enough thread to last until Tony grew to fit the trousers. And Johnnie had done something more. He had not forgotten sister-law's defiance; hence unrelentingly had he dealt vengeance for the insult to the pretty ruler of 1-A. The right side of Tony's face was immaculate, but the other half was untouched.

"See-metrically divided in the middle," declared the artist proudly. "It was a cinch on his face, but the rest o' the way I had to chalk him off." He exhibited a piece of green chalk and pointed to the beginning of a line on the victim's neck.

"Take him back and wash the other half," commanded Mr. Parks.

But it was Helen that gave poor Johnnie the crushing blow. He saw it coming when that familiar look of compassion, that look so much like his mother's, spread over her face and she made a motion to take the son of Italy in her arms. She drew back; and as the crestfallen hero turned to escort his charge away for another half-hour of the strenuous life, he heard her say:

"Poor little soul! Shall we punish them for their parents' ignorance, born of poverty and poor government? I am afraid I take it too much to heart. I was not cut out to be a teacher."

The boy swung around to extenuate his deed, but stopped with his mouth open. Daniel Parks, teacher of Class 7-B, was standing very close to Helen Bouck, teacher of 1-A, and the pair were looking into each other's eyes.

"No, you were not meant to be a teacher," said the man.

Johnnie flopped against the wall and, before he realized what he was saying, blurted out dejectedly: "Huh! I'm cut out! *Some* jolt, believe *me!*"

The remark jolted the man and the woman apart hurriedly. It shocked Johnnie himself. Three flushed countenances faced one another in that hallway, all three surprised to discover that Johnnie was jealous; all confused at the revelation that he had reason to be.

Mr. Parks recovered himself first and boldly reached out for the lady's hand. She did not raise her eyes to his, but cast them sympathetically upon the crestfallen Johnnie. Whereupon Johnnie saw that he was duly elected little brother. Grabbing Tony by the hand, he yanked the youngster down the corridor.

"Soives me right," he muttered. "That's what I git for lettin' on what a peacherino she is. An' I washed her wop!"

Daniel Parks, teacher of Class 7-B, was standing very close to Helen Bouck, teacher of 1-A, and the pair were looking into each other's eyes.

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Inefficient Mr. Jones

By A. Neil Lyons

This is another of those snappy little sketches by this British writer whose work is winning an increasing popularity abroad. This one is packed with his characteristic dry and refreshing humor.

EVERARD WILBERFORCE JONES was how his mother planned it; but he defeated all her fondness by growing up into Bug Jones. When I first became acquainted with him he was about twenty years old; a tall young man, supernaturally thin, with damp, black hair brushed back to the nape of his neck, where it formed luxuriant festoons all over the back of his collar. He had a sensitive, childish mouth, the least little scrap of an upturned nose, and a pair of remarkably credulous eyes, round and wondering. He peered at everything, whether letters in a book, or mustard in a pot, or wild geese flying high, through gold-rimmed spectacles.

Bug Jones was at this time a student at a veterinary college in London, England. He was their show student; the winner of all their medals and diplomas, the holder of all their intellectual championships. But he could not play football. This was held to be his chief failing.

Microbes and germs formed the pedestal on which Mr. Jones had based the column of his attainments; but the column itself, the obelisk, the edifice, was a monument of parasites—of fleas and ants and lice. His passionate researches into the habits of these intruders had earned for Mr. Jones his very expressive pet name. "Hullo!" we would exclaim, on meeting him. "Here's old Bug Jones. He will show us a new louse." Which he undoubtedly would do.

Bug Jones carried such minutiæ about with him in all sorts of receptacles and in all his pockets. Sometimes they were enclosed in pill-boxes, sometimes in thimbles plus cotton-wool, sometimes in cotton-wool only. Sometimes again they were squashed flat between circular disks of glass when, for some reason, he would call them "slides." Other specimens, embedded in a sort of aspic on a glass plate, Mr. Jones called "cultures."

But Jones's attachment to these fellow mortals was particularly manifest at mealtimes. Under the joint stimulus of tea and Sally Lunn, all the warmth and cordiality of his unspoilt nature would appear and he would rummage in all his pockets and bring forth his treasures and load your plate with them—parasites in pill-boxes, nits in cotton-wool, and streptococci in aspic.

Such was the Bug Jones of my youth.

ON LEAVING the veterinary college, he left my circle, but I heard of him from time to time and all that I heard was to his credit. He had become a Fellow of his college and of many learned societies. His reputation as a student of sheep lice was international, and his treatise on this matter, together with its appendix on the cognate subject of liver fluke had been translated into eight European languages.

A monograph on goat nits had made a particular hit in the Balkans, where goat breeding is taken seriously; and this resulted in the conferring upon Bug Jones of the Royal Albanian Order of the Golden Thrush (third class). In the meantime, as I was given to understand, Bug Jones remained a bachelor and lived in a poor way in lodgings in a suburb of Birkenhead.

My young friend then turned his attention to mules and mule pests. He wrote the standard biography of the "Blue-Headed Mule-Bug." This work added greatly to his scientific reputation, and the Albanian decoration was reenforced by similar tokens of recognition from Italy and Montenegro, while honorary degrees were conferred upon him by the Universities of Göttingen, Warsaw, and Upsala. In fact it may be said that the principal governments of Europe contended against each other in the race to do honor to this ungainly young Englishman. The one government which stood conspicuously aloof was that of his own country, where science is its own reward and conducts its votaries along a straight and narrow path to lodgings in the neighborhood of Birkenhead.

Mr. Jones's tenure of these lodgings would perhaps have lasted until now, but for the intervention of that great war now so gloriously concluded. This event, as I propose to show, had the effect of altering Mr. Jones's mode of life, as it likewise altered that of other people. The last pre-war recollection which I hold of Bug Jones is vaguely connected in my mind with a blue or pink eagle bestowed upon him by the German Emperor, which celebrated the complete obliteration of the Blue-Headed Mule-Bug in German East Africa. I might have followed up the academic triumphs of Mr. Jones, but the outbreak of the war gave me other and more important things to think about, such as "Form Fours," and "Fall in the Fatigue." So for five years I hardly thought about Bug Jones at all.

But a few months ago Mr. Jones was vividly recalled to my mind. I saw in Conduit Street, London, where the struggling tailors live, a figure in uniform, which in some respects resembled a British officer, but which in most respects looked less like a British officer than anything else which the mind of men could conceive.

The figure was that of a very tall young man, with rounded shoulders, button nose, googoo eyes, gold-rimmed spectacles, and damp black hair, which hung all down the collar of his regimental jacket, like rock cress climbing down an Alpine pass. The regimental jacket was many sizes too small for him, and was notably short in the sleeves It carried no medal ribbons, but was adorned with a number of yellowy stains, which, when the officer approached, seemed to give off an odor of iodin. I watched him approach, and thought how like Bug Jones he looked. A Bug Jones who had waxed even taller, thinner, and more abstract than of yore. Then he spoke, asking to be directed to one of those retiring tailors, who are too modest to advertise. And then I knew that my questioner *was* Bug Jones.

THE recognition was not mutual, but when I had reminded Mr. Jones of the times and places where we had foregathered in ancient days, he seemed to become conscious of having known me, and smiled at me in his sweet way, and uttered a few kind words. I took him to the tailor of his choice, who measured him for a suit of mufti. Mr. Jones, who explained to the tailor that he was about to be demobilized, was kind enough to seek my advice in the selection of a cloth. He was a man of quiet tastes, he explained, who hated to look fast; but he wondered whether material of distinctly purple inclination would look conspicuous. The idea was to get quite away from khaki.

We ultimately chose something of a lavender tendency, which had evidently been originally destined for pre-war wedding trousers. Mr. Jones was duly measured and then, in a rather faltering manner (for he did not have the appearance of a man who had shed much of his early innocence), I invited him to come and help me find a drink. Bug Jones, to my surprise, accepted the invitation.

"I have to admit," he said, "that I would like a cocktail. One learns that sort of thing in the army."

When we arrived at the place where cocktails are compounded Bug Jones ordered his drink. This consisted of a small quantity of Italian Vermouth mixed with a lot of soda-water in a large glass.

"I drink quite a few of these in a day," remarked Bug Jones. "One learns to drink in the army."

Bug Jones had never been a very reserved or close-tongued person, and the effect upon him of the sugary concoction at which he now sipped, was to bring on a flow of amiable chatter.

He was filled with contentment at the prospect of speedy escape from his military rank, and of resuming his insectivorous habits in the Birkenhead attic. He told me that he had been serving as a veterinary officer since the second year of the war. He had proffered his services in the second week, but our government classes had not then found any use for them. Mr. Jones's physique fell far short of the military standard which then existed. His chest

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was too narrow, and his eyes were all wrong. His mental or scientific attainments were considered to be outside the question.

But a year later the military position had so far altered that qualified veterinary surgeons, irrespective of chest and deportment, were in demand. Jones was therefore offered an appointment as veterinary officer with a transport section in Flanders. His duty in that capacity was to examine the heels of horses. It seems to have occurred even to the very modest mind of Mr. Jones, that this was not quite the most suitable employment which could have been found for him, and he went to the length of producing, in a very bashful way, certain evidences of his claim to staff employment. This created amusement. Mr. Jones was jocularly informed that no vacancy existed for an O. ℅ Bugs, and away he went to Flanders with the rank of Veterinary Second Lieutenant and with a hammer for testing horseshoes.

Bug Jones told me that he remained in Flanders for some two years, tapping shoes till his arm ached. At the end of that period he got a transfer, and was not sorry to have it. His transfer took him to Eastern Europe, to the Balkan Peninsula, where, as Veterinary Officer attached to what is called a mobile column, he skipped about plains, and dodged among the rocks, and tottered down the precipices, in the entertaining company of some two hundred mules.

Mules! These eccentric animals, with their attendant vermin, spelt happiness for Bug Jones. He ascended, per mule, to the very pinnacle of triumph and then, as Bug Jones would do, he fell off. He fell off so completely that his military reputation, that fragile structure, was smashed to atoms. The Bug Jones who sat before me in the worn-out spotty uniform hugging and sipping his glass of stomach-ache, was a military failure—a washout. He had been the subject of an adverse military report, and was being summarily demobilized.

"OF COURSE," said Bug Jones, "it's a great comfort in itself, but I wish it had happened in a pleasanter way."

I nodded. "Is it a disgrace?" I asked, adding: "I mean to say, what civilians would call a disgrace?"

"Not quite so bad as that," replied Bug Jones. "It only means that I am militarily inefficient—what soldiers would call a B. F."

I gurgled an expression of sympathy.

"Yes," said Bug Jones, "it's a wrench in its way. I shall miss them all so."

"What—your fellow officers?"

"No, no," replied Bug Jones, "my fellow mules."

Then in his rather jerky, bashful way, he told me more about it. "Of course," he said, "I thought too much about the mules. And yet, I mean to say, what else can one do? They lead one on so. Perfect animals, mules, don't you think?"

This was the first time in my life I had heard a mule described as perfect. But what is an adjective as between friends? I let him keep the word.

"I have to own," resumed Bug Jones, "that I'm prejudiced.

"That serum of mine—the one good thing I've done. You see, if there had been no mules, there could have been no mule-bug. No mule-bug, no serum. No serum—well, I mean to say, I *like* mules."

I nodded sympathetically, while Mr. Jones imbibed some more of his own distinctive nectar.

"OF COURSE, for one thing," he continued smacking his lips, "it is like a gift of Providence, my getting these mules at all. I mean to say, just think of it! Me, with my hobby, being suddenly flung out there with two hundred mules to squirt at. In a country where this mule-bug lived absolutely unmolested, multiplying and multiplying, ever since old Hannibal first dropped him there.

"Was your squirting a success?" I asked.

Bug Jones blinked at me through his spectacles. "Well, yes," he admitted, shyly. "My stuff—that serum—was more or less established some years ago, you know. The Germans in East Africa—the Belgians in the Congo—even the Americans ran a station somewhere on the Pacific Slope. Our people left it alone, of course. They keep aloof from that sort of thing. It's their policy, you know."

"But what did you squirt them *for?*" I persisted.

"To poison the mule-bug," replied Bug Jones. "I didn't lose a mule. Not one. Some of the other V. O.'s, who were hooked up to other columns, had rotten luck with their mules; appalling luck. Some of them lost up to fifty per cent. But—" he added hastily, with a sudden blush, as it evidently occurred to him that he might be accused of boasting, "But my mules didn't owe it all to the serum. Not by heaps. I put down half my luck—more than half—to the food they got. That spineless cactus, you know."

"Spineless *what?*" I interjected.

"Cactus," repeated Bug Jones. "You know: the sort of thing your uncle would grow in a warm bay window. A weird, impossible thing, like an elephant's liver turned green, with horrible looking spikes growing out of it."

I knew what he meant now. I had seen those cheerless products of the horticultural art, and had wondered why they were grown. But, somehow, I had not associated them with mules.

"Why should you?" exclaimed Bug Jones. "Mules are not your business. The point about the cactus," he continued, "is that it is a native of the desert. A cactus likes sun, drought and sand, and will grow and flourish where no other green thing would even germinate. The cactus is very good eating too, from a mule standpoint if—and it's the deuce of an IF—you could only get rid of those snags—those thorns of spines."

I performed my expressive nod again.

"Well," continued Bug Jones, "there's a chap in America—a sort of wizard he is, a botanical hypnotist, and he's invented a spineless cactus. See? He's kept the cactus and cut out the teeth. Wonderful, isn't it? The thing we've all wanted.

"Now as it happens," he went on, "I've been in touch for some years past with this old American chap. You see, although I'm not a botanist, what he was doing went a good way up my street. You see it was bound to appeal to anybody like me, who is interested in mules, and camels, and persons like that. So I corresponded with this old gentleman, and he sent me a packet of seeds, and a book of the works. And I redirected the lot to a chap I know in Norfolk, who owns a few acres of sand and is trying to bring out a seedless gooseberry.

"This chap did what was right to these American seeds, and they responded perfectly. He's been feeding his goats on spineless cactus for three or four years, and it suits them well. So I got some seed sent out to me, to the thankless plains of the peninsula, and we had great luck with it. It grew while you looked at it out there, and the mules had a change from their compressed forage. Great Scott, they fairly fought for it! When we returned to Divisional Headquarters before the embarkation, my mules were as good to look at, as sleek, as bright in the coat as if they had just lined up for a cattle show."

MR. JONES put down his glass. "So you see," he said reflectively, "it isn't my serum that gets the credit—not by a long shot. That old gentleman in California takes most of it."

Then I got in a question. "But," I said, "where does the disgrace of all this come in? It seems to me that you did pretty well with your mules."

"Ah, that's it," replied Bug Jones. "I got so keen on those mules I forgot my duty. I dropped the deuce of a brick at Headquarters."

"How was that?"

"The day we marched in," said Bug Jones. "Parade of all the mobile columns. General inspection, and all that. Other columns twenty—thirty—fifty mules short. Remaining specimens too weak to stagger. Some of them could hardly stand up in their shiny harness. Made me sick to look at them. But my mules—Ah!—A full muster, and all as fat as butter. I felt like standing myself a drink—until——"

"Until when?"

"Until the General stopped it. Ours was the last column in the line and he came alone, the others smiling, and saluting, and all that. But when he came to ours—by Gad! I—I—thought he would have apoplexy. The General turned absolutely purple—he shouted at me and pointed to my wagons, and he said:

"'You—*you*, sir. You might have had your wagons cleaned before *I* came round. And your harness,' he said, 'is a damned disgrace.' "

"So then," added Bug Jones, getting up from his chair, "he sent in his report, and it was a very adverse one. And—and—here I am!"

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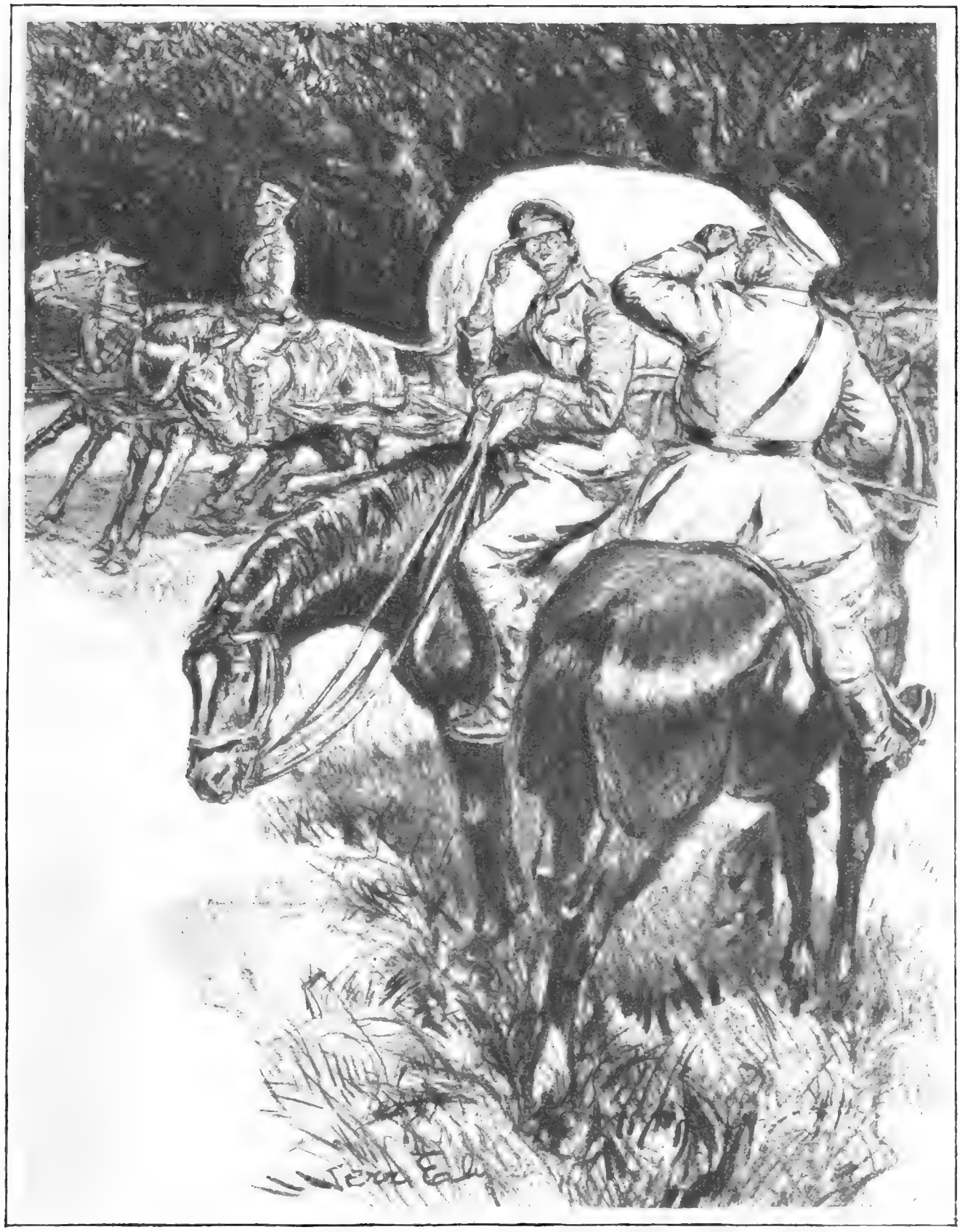

"'You—you, sir. You might have had your wagons cleaned before I came round. And your harness,' he said, 'is a damned disgrace.'"

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Our Ears In Washington

By William G. Shepherd

Richard V. Oulahan, of the New York Times.

In the coming month you, and the other odd millions of us will depend very largely upon these men for what we hear about the political currents and personalities that swirl through Washington toward the event of November. They are among he strongest factors in the campaign. By giving the American people the news of their seat of government they help choose its head. It's time we got acquainted with them.

THERE'S a small crowd of young men in Washington upon whom the one hundred and six million folks in the United States are leaning with all their weight; leaning, perhaps, for the very welfare of these good old United States; leaning at least for truth, which is the breath of life of our nation.

They are not officials, these young men; not senators or congressmen or prohibition detectives. Their salaries don't come from Uncle Sam. Indeed, you and I and almost all the one hundred and six million of us pay their salaries in such small dribbles that we hardly notice the outgo. What they give us in return for our money is one of the few necessities of life that has not gone up greatly in price.

To-day, when you bought your morning or your evening paper, you helped to pay the great salary of this important group of Washington citizens, the two hundred or more newspaper correspondents and reporters in Washington who tell the folks of the United States what is going on in their national capital.

Prying the Lid Off at Paris

I WANT to talk about them as a group before I begin to deal with them as individuals. The temptation to compare them with the correspondents in the capitals of other nations is too great to resist, even if the result savor of jingoism. It has been only within the past two years that the Washington correspondents have had an opportunity to come into touch with the correspondents of European nations. And, when they did come into contact with the Europeans, they did a thing that was so finely American that the incident ought to go down in history as one of the clean, big, fine things that America did in the war; as one of the fine, big principles that the United States shouted out to the world.

This incident occurred at the opening of the peace conference in Paris. Political correspondents had come to Paris from every Allied capital of Christendom. They gathered into groups, of course. The British correspondents from London had their own press rooms; so did the Italians and the French and the Japanese, and groups of correspondents from neutral countries, and from the little Balkans. The eyes of the world were on Paris, but the mind of the world had to depend on these various news centers in the French capital.

Like a shock came the word from the peace conference officials that all sessions would be secret. In all these news centers, except one, not a voice of protest was raised. The British correspondents took the news without murmur; so did the others.

That one exception was the news center of the American correspondents in the Hotel de Crillon; all the leaders there were Washington correspondents, or men who had been trained in the Washington newspaper school. They shouted to high heaven against the peace decision. The little room, with its rough bulletin-board, its rough deal tables, its crowded typewriters of every brand and its doughboy orderlies, acted like the curb market on a wild day when the news of secret proceedings came to it.

The British correspondents heard the shout; like good Anglo-Saxons they joined in, delighted that some one had been brave enough to start a row. Together, the British and the American correspondents formed a protest which would be bravely handed to the little group of master statesmen of the world, who thought they were in Paris to try to decide the earth's destiny. The Italian correspondents were for secrecy; it was found later that some of their leaders were, in reality, French Foreign Office men. The British correspondents voted that members of the peace conference ought to be permitted to give out to correspondents privately such news as they thought should be published.

L. C. Probert, who wrote the story of the famous Zimmermann note.

But the American correspondents from Washington went the limit; they voted that every gathering of the statesmen ought to be as open as a Salvation Army street meeting. They lost, of course. The Italians and the French had their way. The peace conference was as secret, while it was under way, as a Prussian cabinet council.

Disrespectful Journalism

BUT the Washington correspondent had let the people of the world know where American journalism stood on the question of truth in the news. He astonished the journalists of Europe with his demand for the whole truth. He astonished them with his independence and his absence of awe in approaching the great of the earth. "Lack of respect" was charged up against him among the statesmen of Europe, but he showed up the journalism of some of the European countries in a way that gave heart and good courage to some of the European journalists who never, in their whole careers, had been given an opportunity to put the truth into the news; and they came to look upon American journalism as the cleanest and fairest in the world.

Put that down for jingoism, if you will; every correspondent who was there knows it for the truth. I have had Spanish and Japanese and Holland and British and French and Italian correspondents compliment American correspondents for the stand for truth that they took in Paris.

"You must have great leeway with your government in Washington," exclaimed one French correspondent to an American writer.

"Yes, and your government must have great leeway with you," answered the man from Washington.

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There are various types of the Washington correspondent. The men there, who during the coming months will be telling the people of the United States the news of national politics leading up to the coming presidential campaign, work in various manners and in various spheres of Washington life, with various view-points and aims.

In the first place, you can put down the Washington correspondent as a trained newspaper man. There are not many jobs for cub reporters in Washington, when it comes to covering national news. The average Washington correspondent had humble beginnings. Usually he started in the city hall or the courthouse back in his own home town. The town council or the board of aldermen or the board of county commissioners gave him his first insight into lawmaking and politics. He had to stand out first as a good reporter to get his head above the other reporters around him. Without the respect or the confidence or perhaps even the fear of the aldermen or the county commissioners whose meetings he "covered" and whose intrigues he sifted and understood, he could not have begun his climb toward eminence.

Their Training

IN HIS home town he began to get the feel of wider politics. The politicians of the state became known to him; the very act of delving into their plans and schemes fascinated him. When other reporters "covered" meetings of politicians and officials in a routine, secretarial style, this young man, because of certain extra convolutions in his brain perhaps, was hit right in the center of his imagination by the game of politics.

When, too, other reporters as interested in politics as he jumped into the game themselves, and found delight in taking petty public offices, this reporter, with his wagon hitched to a star, remained detached from the game itself and stood on the side lines to watch it and write about it.

His own state capital finally claimed him. He covered the sessions of the legislature; watched the politics of all parties, and the inter-party politics of all groups. His stories were all written, of course, for the people of his own state, but in the small field he was doing a job little different from the bigger one that was awaiting him at Washington.

And then came a day when, after he had covered the state capital successfully and had reached out to cover the work of the Senators and Representatives from his state, his editor said to him:

"You go to Washington and write stories for us about what our senators and representatives are doing for our state in congress."

On that day he reached the goal of hundreds of American reporters—the goal which hundreds of them will never reach. He became that envied man, awing all reporters, a Washington correspondent.

Soon he found that there are different kinds of Washington correspondents; and soon he found his niche and either began to aim toward even higher eminence, or settled down to spend the rest of his life telling the folks back home what he thought his paper would like them to know.

The Washington correspondents may be divided into two kinds: those whose names are not signed to their articles and those whose names are signed. The dean of the Washington correspondents to-day is a man whose articles, throughout many years, have never been signed, and a man who is unknown to the public at large. He has scooped more competitors in his particular line of news, and yet he has more friends at the National Press and in the Gridiron Club, than any other correspondent in the capital. He is "Eddie" Hood, of the Associated Press. The State Department is his stamping-ground. For over thirty years he has, of course, personally known all the Secretaries of State and all the under-secretaries.

Here is a true story about Edwin M. Hood to show his quiet influence in Washington. He stepped into the office of John Hay, Secretary of State one morning many years ago to ask for the latest news.

"Here's a note I'm writing to an Oriental potentate," said Hay. It was a note demanding that the "potentate" secure the safety of an American citizen named Pericardis, who had been kidnaped by a bandit named Raisuli. It was a very dignified note.

"What do you think of it?" asked Secretary Hay.

"Well, the whole thing makes me mad," said Hood. "I'd say, 'Pericardis alive or Raisuli dead!' "

"That's exactly the idea," said Hay.

Two hours later a statement was issued to the press saying that Hay had issued an ultimatum of only five words to the offending government. It was the ultimatum that Hood had devised

"I was surprised to learn that Hay had taken my very words," Hood told me the other day. "I really felt when I spoke so vigorously to him that I was being a little impolite."

When Hood went to Paris to the peace conference, his acquaintance with ambassadors and ex-ambassadors, ex-secretaries to ex-ambassadors, and with great European statesmen who at some time in their ascending careers had represented their governments in Washington, was so extensive that in one way or another he was able to work out many secrets that were not intended for public knowledge.

E. M. Hood, dean of the Washington correspondents, who hobnobs with diplomats.

C. C. Brainerd, of the Brooklyn Eagle, who believes people are most interested in people.

The War's Biggest Scoop

L. C. PROBERT, of the Associated Press, head of the Washington Bureau, is another correspondent, famous among correspondents, who is unknown to the public. Perhaps the biggest thing he ever did, during fifteen years in Washington, was to write the story of the Zimmermann note during the war. It was one of the great scoops of the war.

When the news was given out in Washington late one evening that the American Government had intercepted a note from the Imperial German Government in Berlin to its representative in Mexico, instructing him to draw Mexico into the war on Germany's side and telling him to promise Mexico that it would be given certain portions of the United States in return for its loyalty to Germany, Probert, chief of the Washington bureau of the Associated Press, dropped his other duties and sat down to write the story himself. He wanted a cold-blooded story. He knew that a hot-headed story, full of jingoism and hate, would miss the mark. For three hours he banged away at his typewriter—I have seen the actual copy of that famous story—while messenger boys ran to the telegraph operators with a paragraph every few minutes. In the end he had turned out a story that for cold truth, unheated facts, frigid analysis, and even politeness to the enemy, was a masterpiece. Diplomats in Washington suspected a diplomat of having written the story. It was a piece of writing that carried conviction, even to pro-German minds.

This story appeared at a time when idiotic and unconvincing howlings permeated the American press; at a time when a certain class of editors had abandoned even the ordinary processes of thinking and logic, and filled their papers with mere noises that sounded like the chants of Indian medicine-men. Probert's fine, cold, fact-filled story had a strong influence in steadying the editorial style of war-time American journalism.

The day of the correspondent who does not sign his name, however, is passing in

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Gus Karger, a favorite of the Taft regime, famous for his wit.

Washington. The Associated Press is old-fashioned in its custom of taking for itself the credit of good journalism; it is a club of newpaper editors and publishers, and its situation in this respect is different from that of the other two great agencies.

Both the United Press and the International News, which serve many hundreds of newspapers in the United States, have correspondents in Washington whose political stories during the present political campaign will carry names familiar to American newspaper readers, including that of William Philip Simms, the war correspondent, for many years correspondent of the United Press in Paris, and now chief of the International News bureau in Washington, and Robert J. Bender, of the United Press. Both of these well-known newspaper writers covered the peace conference in Paris.

Simms's Big Stunt

ONE of Simms's most notable achievements was to go into Switzerland in February, 1918, when he was attached as an official correspondent of the British army, and write a series of six articles foretelling the great German drive of the coming month. In these Simms told of the methods the Germans would use, told of the coming drive, described how everything would be staked on it and how terrific a drive it would be. He pointed out where the blow would fall, and when. When he returned to British headquarters, the high officers in the intelligence department called Simms into conference. All of Simms's information agreed with that of the department and, in addition, Simms was able to give some facts that the department lacked. One bit of great comfort which he put forth delighted the British. They had been fearing that the coming drives would disclose the use of a terrible new form of poison gas. Simms was able to tell the British leaders that the Germans had no new gases.

Robert Bender's most remarkable story, perhaps, is still fresh—perhaps only too fresh—in American minds. For years Bender had known President Wilson personally. After the armistice the question arose of who would represent the United States at the peace conference. One day Bender wrote a story for the United Press which astonished his superiors as thoroughly as it later astonished the reading public.

"Wilson is going to Paris to the peace conference," was the gist of the story. "He won't send anybody to represent him."

The story at the time seemed preposterous; Wilson would be breaking all precedents to leave the United States.

"I'll stick by the story," said Bender, when his editors hesitated. "It's dead true."

Bender's editors put the story on the wire; it created consternation and surprise. But we all realize that it was perhaps only too true.

"I knew Wilson by heart. I knew he couldn't stay away from Paris. I had never seen him delegate any power to anybody and I knew he couldn't do so in the great peace conference," Bender has since explained. "No one told me Wilson was going to Paris. Perhaps Wilson himself didn't realize it at the time. But I knew the man and I knew he'd have to go to Paris. So I wrote the story."

The Washington correspondent who devotes his time to news alone has a realm all his own. The news-agency men are news men, pure and simple. Interpretation of news events, or other political coloring to suit the politics of certain newspapers, does not come within their scope. They serve newspapers of all shades of political opinion, and it is not for them to take sides, but only to give the cold news facts.

There are few Washington correspondents who devote their attention to cold news alone without reference to its political or economic color. Just as the American newspapers have political color, or liberal or conservative leanings, so the Washington correspondents are cut up into various divisions of political thought.

It is the interpretative correspondent in Washington who draws down the big money, and who has a standing both in Washington and back in his own home district. For instance, wherever the Boston *Transcript* is known, W. E. Brigham is a familar name. "Bill" Brigham is elderly; he wears glasses which he carries low on his nose so that they will not interfere with his sight. His specialty is economics, and he has been known to become as excited over a mass of figures which he has dug up in some out-of-the-way Washington bureau as a young police reporter over his first fire. Correspondents who trip up on statistics often run over to his office for help in solving a tangle of annual reports or tariff schedules. C. C. Brainerd of the Brooklyn *Eagle* is another institution as familiar to *Eagle* readers as the title of the paper itself. Brainerd's first name is Chauncey. He says he doesn't like it. He has a quarrel with it. Being philosophic, he doesn't use it. Brainerd writes about people, not about things. This is one of the secrets of his great success. He personally wrote this bit of newspaper philosophy for me:

"The average citizen was more interested in Sereno Payne as a grave statesman baffled over something he did not understand than he was in Mr. Payne's tariff. President Wilson is more interesting than his treaty. Uncle Joe is more interesting than Congress. Senator Lodge, Hiram Johnson and Jim Reed are more interesting than the League of Nations. Admiral Sims and Josephus Daniels are more interesting than Navy medals. Personalities achieve more than policies or principles. When you know a man fairly well, you can usually figure what he will do in a given set of circumstances." (Please note the story of Bender's scoop on Wilson's trip to Paris.) "The human equation is always on top. How many read every line on the President's illness; how many read every line of his Adriatic notes? My guess is that the proportion is about a thousand to one. If I thought it was the other way around, I'd want to quit Washington."

The News Bureaus

THE largest bureaus in Washington are maintained, naturally, by the New York and Chicago papers. Although these newspapers are supplied with the services of one or two of the three great news agencies, they find it necessary in the great competition for news, and for particular brands of news, to have their own correspondents at the capital. These bureaus of the metropolitan dailies have staffs of

William Philip Simms, who foretold a big German offensive.

from three to six men, with leased wires running directly from the Washington bureau to the editorial rooms hundreds of miles away. Managing editors of the great newspapers, by means of these bureaus, are as closely in touch with national affairs at Washington as they are with their local police reporters.

The dean of these metropolitan news bureaus is Richard V. Oulahan of the New York *Times*. He has been in Washington so long that it is said he had a scoop on the burning of the Capitol by the British. His real name is "Dick." He was among the Washington correspondents who stood for open sessions of the peace conference at Paris. He has been, in his time, assistant publisher of the New York *Sun* and London correspondent. There is a legend that "a good correspondent in Washington always knows ten times more than he can print, until the right time comes," and Oulahan, with other

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correspondents who have won their spurs at the capital, has a life-long record of never having broken a confidence.

Charles Michelson of the New York *World* has charge of a bureau in Washington which is so tightly connected with the New York office by telegraph wires, that it might as well be an office in the World Building. He knows his Washington through long years, as a country editor knows his home town, but he gleans news of national importance through a staff of reporters as easily as a country editor covers arrivals down at the railroad station. Louis Siebold of the *World* is another New York writer known to every statesman and politician in the country. Other New York papers may have less expensive bureaus in Washington, but all of them have correspondents more or less well known, such as Carter Field of the New York *Tribune*, M. F. Tighe of the New York *American*, and Harold Stokes of the New York *Evening Post*.

The Chicago *Daily News* and the Chicago *Tribune* are among the dailies with large Washington bureaus. Leroy T. Vernon of the *Daily News* is one of the high-priced correspondents of Washington. He is so thoroughly familiar with Republican politics and is so generally acquainted with all the Republican leaders that every leap-year he takes a vacation from his Washington bureau, enters into the publicity department of the Republican campaign committee and tries to help in the election of a Republican President.

Leroy T. Vernon, Republican and also correspondent of the Chicago Daily News.

If you question the partisanship of a correspondent who helps the Republicans in a presidential election, you will find a good instance of this same vital interest in party success in William J. Cochran of the late *Republic* of St. Louis, who after years of successful work in Washington is now the publicity director of the Democratic National Committee. Vernon and Cochran will probably fight it out between themselves on the field of publicity in the coming presidential campaign. Arthur S. Henning of the Chicago *Tribune* has a name in the Middle West for serving out good Republican doctrine in the news columns from Washington.

Various Presidents have had their pets among the correspondents in Washington, from time to time. It is at once a joyous and troublous thing for a correspondent to be thus distinguished. "Teacher's pet" in the old days at school had no thornier road to go than the "President's pet" at the White House. The benefits are manifold in the way of scoops and other blessings, but envy is set afoot and tongues start wagging. Two famous correspondents now in Washington have enjoyed this not undiluted pleasure. Gus J. Karger is one. Long ago he was forgiven; for long he has been the favorite toastmaster and chief witty dinner-speaker of the Washington correspondents. But once, when Taft was President, he had the inside track at the White House. For years Karger had been the Washington correspondent of the Cincinnati *Times-Star*, which was owned by Charles P. Taft, brother of William. Naturally enough, he took a vigorous part in the election of Taft, and naturally enough his entry into the White House was assured when Taft was elected.

Even to-day, with the Taft star set, correspondents in Washington who seek occasional interviews with Taft on the League of Nations or other topics look up Gus Karger and ask him to fix it for them. William Howard Taft never turns down a reporter sent to him by Karger. While he is credited with having known everything that went on during the Taft Administration, the Washington correspondents do say that Gus was willing to divide up on news whenever he could do so—and whenever it would help William Howard Taft.

A "President's Pet"

THE other "President's pet" was Gilson Gardner, of the Newspaper Enterprise Association, a feature-service well known among editors. Gardner is the only one of the correspondents left in Washington who was known in Roosevelt's time as "a fair-haired boy," the Washington reporter's equivalent for "teacher's pet." Gardner was one of the few correspondents who went down to Africa to help escort Roosevelt home. He was one of the few who met and talked with Roosevelt at least once during every one of Roosevelt's busy days, both at the White House and during the long and eventful European triumphal trip. He knew Roosevelt's policies; was credited, indeed, with helping him to form them. He was often used by Roosevelt to sound out public opinion in various parts of the country and, while Roosevelt was President, articles from the White House bearing Gardner's name were considered authoritative.

With the departure of Taft from the White House, however, the institution of "President's pet" waned. There are one or two Washington correspondents—say Arthur Sinnot of the Newark (New Jersey) *Evening News*, or David Lawrence, a Wilson student at Princeton—whom Wilson has honored at times with his confidence, but there has been no real "fair-haired boy" during the Wilson Administration.

This fact is reflected by the personnel of the young men who now cover the White House. They number a dozen or more bright reporters who watch incoming and outgoing visitors, and confer every morning with Joseph Tumulty, the President's secretary. But they are doing a straightforward energetic reporting, with a fair field for everybody. In the Taft and Roosevelt days it was not the bright, watchful, waiting young reporter who did the work at the White House. It was the reporter's boss who did the job then. The job at the White House now is just as delicate perhaps, in its own way, but in those days there were the "fair-haired boys" to beat, and no one but the boss felt like taking the responsibility.

Gilson Gardner, "fair-haired boy" of the Roosevelt régime.

In the Taft and Roosevelt days, too, the President at any time might admit all the correspondents into open conference and permit them to ask all the questions they pleased, reserving the right to answer or not, as he saw fit. President Wilson, at Paris, gave several of these conferences, at which we correspondents bombarded him with queries, but at home in Washington he abolished the Roosevelt-Taft system of conferences not long after inauguration and has not resumed it since.

An International Expert

OTHER papers than New York and Chicago dailies, however, maintain expensive bureaus and high-priced correspondents in Washington. Frederick William Wile, one of the few American newspaper men who attained success in British journalism, and who for many years was Berlin correspondent of Lord Northcliffe's London *Daily Mail*, is head of the bureau of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* in Washington. International politics is his specialty, and his acquaintance with European statesmen is extensive.

Angus McSween, who is preeminently the aggressively progressive correspondent of Washington, independent politically, is the chief correspondent of the Philadelphia *North American*, and Clinton Gilbert has the bureau of the Philadelphia *Evening Ledger*.

The Baltimore *Sun* carries almost as much news of Washington affairs as do the Washington papers themselves, as only forty miles intervene between the two cities. Fred Essery of the *Sun* bureau is as much read by Washington officials—who seem to be as news-hungry as any

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Robert Bender, who was able to guess what Wilson was going to do.

other individuals in America—as the writers on the Washington papers.

There is hardly a district of the United States that is not, generally speaking, covered by newspapers that have special correspondents in Washington. Certain New England newspapers are well served by a woman correspondent who is as much in touch with Washington affairs, especially as they affect New England, as any male reporter in the capital town. She is Mrs. George F. Richards. Some years ago, when her husband died, she took over his duties as a Washington correspondent with a success that the Washington correspondents consider remarkable, but which in no way seems to surprise her. She knows the interests of various New England districts, and seeks out news which she knows will appeal to the readers there.

Western News Tastes

IN THE far Northwest W. W. Jermane's name is well known to newspaper readers who are interested in Washington affairs. He is noted for independence in politics, and the Seattle *Times* makes his articles an important feature.

The Iowa district knows John Snure of Des Moines, who serves several Iowa newspapers. He covers the corn belt and knows it like a book. What the folks in this district or that would like to know are all matters of instinct with Snure, after his long years in Washington. New York City might not think him a great correspondent, any more than Iowa would see greatness or interest in the racy, metropolitan chattiness of a New York star; but let Western politics be the theme or the advance of agriculture, and Snure will tell you the last iota of news about it.

In the near South, the Carolinas and Georgia, Theodore Tiller has been telling people the Washington news for many years. What with writing for the Atlanta *Journal*, which has the motto, "The *Journal* Covers Dixie Like the Dew," and for the Greensboro *Daily News*, Tiller is well known to Southern newspaper readers.

Hornaday is the name that Indiana folks know best, perhaps, in the list of Washington correspondents. Hardly a day has gone by for many years that the name "James P. Hornaday" has not appeared in the Indianapolis *News* over some story from Washington. "Jim" Hornaday knows what interests the Hoosiers; he knows how to write it, too. In his own way—that is, in the matter of accomplishing what he has set out to do, he is as much a success as any of the literary lights of Indiana; they chose story-writing or poetry or cartooning for the field of endeavor, and "Jim" Hornaday decided to spend his life in telling the folks back home what deal Indiana was getting "up in Washin'ton." He has done it entertainingly and thoroughly for many years.

Kansas and Missouri want agricultural news. It wouldn't hurt a New York correspondent one bit to be scooped on the fact that a cobless brand of corn had been developed or that a seedless wheat had been found, but if Roy Roberts of the Kansas City *Star* didn't have a story about such a world-upsetting incident in his paper within a few hours after it had happened, his record would be blighted. The *Star* bureau in Washington, of which Roberts is the head, aims also to satisfy the political as well as the agricultural curiosity of the Kansas and Missouri folks, and as politics in that part of the country is always seething, Roberts is writing politics every day in the year.

Way down South in the bayou country Charles P. Keyser of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* and Paul Wooten of the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* furnish Washington news. Wooten has an extensive knowledge of Mexico and South America. Shippers in the New Orleans district and farther south are greatly interested in South American trade, and Wooten makes a specialty of keeping them supplied with news on this subject. Wooten's work is only one instance of the high degree of specialization in which a good Washington correspondent must engage. He must know his home district and the wants back there as well as he knows his Washington. He may forget Washington and its view-point now and then; but the moment he forgets the folks back home and their interests, his usefulness as a correspondent is ended.

William J. Cochran, Democrat, and former St. Louis Republic correspondent.

David Lawrence, who can interpret Wilson s mind.

It is for this reason that the National Press Club in Washington is as representative a body of American men as Congress itself. Though the hundreds of correspondents who go there each day for lunch or to devote a spare hour in the evening to dominoes, which is the favorite game of the club—a dozen tables and a dozen sets of exquisite solid ivory dominoes, of which it is very proud, being continually devoted to this pastime—are all engaged in the common pursuit of getting news and interpreting it, their readers in various parts of the land have such varied interests that it is safe to say no two of these bright-faced energetic young fellows—gray-haired as some of them are—are doing the same sort of newspaper work. Out of the great mass of news in Washington each is selecting what he knows will interest his own home people either from a national or a local view-point. In the Press Club, perhaps more than in any one place in Washington—or in the United States, for that matter—one can catch kaleidoscopic glimpses of the tangle of interests, opinions and aims of the folks who go to make up the one hundred and six million of us.

No "Stage Reporters"

IF YOU think of these correspondents in terms of "stage reporters" with flashy clothing, pencil and pad, and the jaunty, supercilious air of the man about town, you have pictured them wrongly. In the first place, if you know Washington you will believe me when I say that your real live 'man-about-town" would die in Washington; it's no town to knock around in or to go to for fun. In the second place, no Washington correspondent can succeed without good, hard, serious labor in which mental work as well as leg work counts for much.

Twenty thousand dollars a year is about the top-notch salary for Washington correspondents. Not more than half a dozen make that much. Perhaps another half dozen are good for fifteen thousand dollars to twelve thousand five hundred dollars. But these are the stars. From one hundred dollars to one hundred and fifty dollars a week is considered good pay.

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Now and then one of them shoots up to fame. This is usually because he introduces a new idea and does something which has never been done before. Samuel Blythe, once of the New York *World*, started a career that led him to financial independence and far beyond by adding to his budget of news a regularly published assortment of funny stories which described the statesmen he was talking about better than they could ever have been described by long picture-stories.

His success attracted the attention of the editors of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and since then Blythe has become nationally known as a writer on politics and national affairs.

Frederick J. Haskins next broke away from the crowd with a new idea. He discovered that folks all over the United States had a great curiosity about Washington affairs, and he set out to discover exactly what everybody or anybody wanted to know about Washington. He then set for himself the task of giving the answers in authoritative articles sent to newspapers by mail. He has a large office in Washington and serves, through his syndicate, many American newspapers.

A Washington Success

THE latest "success" in Washington is young David Lawrence. He has just passed thirty, but he has developed a new idea in distributing Washington news. He had served the Associated Press and the New York *Evening Post* in Washington, and he knew the Washington game like a book. He discovered that editors and newspaper readers wanted "interpretation" of Washington events. The news agencies might carry the cold facts about Washington, but editors wanted to know the "why" of these facts. They didn't want to wait a week for them, either; they wanted them right away. Lawrence now serves some one hundred newspapers in the United States with a telegraphic story of analysis and interpretation. He has a large suite of offices in Washington with an office force larger than that of many newspapers, and assistants in many American cities. He has his own leased telegraph wires for distribution. Every weekday at 11 o'clock in the morning he puts on the wires in his office a simple-looking nine-hundred-word story which he has just written. For the next two hours

Frederick William Wile, a former British journalist.

that story scuttles throughout the wires of telegraphdom until it has reached every corner of the country. It is a story of the "why" of the latest news incident in Washington. Lawrence has about three and a half million readers, and his present income tax is said to work out at about a cent a reader.

European correspondents are rare in Washington. While American correspondents may be found abiding permanently in every capital in Europe, the European newspapers are not so enterprising. Sir Arthur Willert—who doesn't use the "Sir" at the Press Club—is the correspondent of the London *Times*. From Paris, every few months, there comes to Washington G. Lechartier of the *Petit Parisien*. The correspondents of the European newspapers who make their headquarters in New York City run down to Washington now and then when a story breaks that appears to be of interest to them; but their attention to governmental affairs was always spasmodic until the war broke out. Since that ended, the European correspondent has not been seen frequently in Washington.

Any one who knows the international news game is well justified in laying it out cold that American newspapers, through their correspondents in European capitals, know far more in a news way of the politics and government affairs of European nations than the European newspapers know of us.

It is pretty safe to say, after deliberate estimate and thought, that the American newspapers pay far more, year in and year out, peace or war, to get news from Europe than do the European newspapers to get news from America.

The war has developed a new sort of Washington correspondent. Five years ago it helped a Washington correspondent very little to be familiar with European politics. To-day such knowledge enhances his value beyond measure.

The Super-Journalist

THE League of Nations, now established in Europe, will call into existence shortly a new type of journalist, a super-correspondent. Geneva will be his home. He will have to cover the inter-governmental news of the world. A mastery of language will be demanded of him. He must come to know the leading statesmen of the earth and they must come to know him and to trust and respect him. On that plot of land at Geneva where, it has been decided, the bureau of the League of Nations shall be established, they have set aside space for the erection of one of the largest wireless stations on the planet. Aeroplane fields are to be made to receive winged couriers from every corner of the world. At Lake Geneva it is planned that there shall be an anchorage for the great balloon ships of the air which will sometimes carry statesmen and lesser people to and fro about the earth. That will be the governmental center of the earth, if plans do not go awry, with news of supreme importance being gathered or made every hour of the day. There is a task for a correspondent to stir your blood.

America's correspondents at Geneva will undoubtedly come from Washington. Some of them, perhaps even now, have been selected by the editors to go to that place of supreme news when the time shall come. Some lad who started to learn statesmanship and its devious ways by watching the village councilmen or the board of aldermen in his little home town will round out his career by keeping tabs on the aldermen of the world.

October

By Allen Crafton

ABOUT my room the goldenrod
Beckons with heavy grace;
And purple asters shyly smile
Upon the chimney place.

Cheerful and warm and comforting
The fire in the grate
Crackles in merry laughter
At beauty come so late.

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Pete meets her at ten o'clock, and at five minutes after ten he's looking as silly as though they had played the hidden-ball trick on him.

The Heart-Crusher

By Louis Lee Arms

Here's a yarn reeking of baseball, written almost altogether in the American language, and with the lilt of the saxophone in its style. Any reader less than one-hundred-per cent. American in this regard will need an interpreter for it, we warn.

JACK of all trades, always a bum, as Manager Patsy Mulligan acidly remarked to Peter Sampson Holden. It was while Manager Patsy was trying to cure his star center-fielder of versatility that there was recorded the longest slide in organized baseball.

There are one-two-and one, two, and three, three-way sliders in baseball. Take Tyrus Raymond C. He can hook into a bag from the right or left, or go straight in and come to his feet ready to peg on to the next cushion if circumstance is favorable. Surprising how few in the big show can do that. But that has nothing to do with this story. Pete was a three-way slider. And he learned a fourth and new one. So did Manager Patsy.

When we hit the Polo Grounds with a stretch of thirty games on the home soil and a chance to finish one-two, we were all feeling good. Even Deacon Rathbun, who hadn't cut the pie, which some people call cracking a smile, since he last saw Nick Altrock imitating "Silk" O'Laughlin behind "Silk's" gently steaming back, broke down with good nature and admitted that there was a guy at the Winter Garden who had a funny song. It was the first show the "Deac" had boosted since the "Follies of 1911."

Then we slumped. We kicked off the last two games to the Senators, handed the Red Sox four in a row and proved that the spirit of Andrew Carnegie is still abroad by losing the opening bill of a five-game series to the Athletics.

We quit singing in the club-house. We dressed and walked out onto Eighth Avenue as solemn as pall-bearers. The newspapers and fans took the stand that we were bank burglars or something until proved otherwise. No wonder Manager Patrick Michael Mulligan was sore! Sore! The old pagan was dizzy.

"I'll be bitten on the big toe and kicked in the ear by a flock of one-eyed gumdrops," he said, for family reading purposes. "If it ain't one thing that's wrong with this aggregation of clubfooted caterpillars it's another. If they're hittin', they ain't fieldin'; if they're fieldin', they ain't hittin', and if they're doin' both they are runnin' bases on dished wheels."

He did not throw a baseball bat at "Smoke Face" Eddie, the rubber, but he looked as though he might.

Manager Patsy started again, sputtered, missed and came to a full stop.

For one, I'm gambling that Pete Holden, sitting there with his face buried in his shoe-laces, was thankful. You could tell by the lines of Pete's back that he was guilty. If all of us had been rotten during the past week, Pete was a little worse than any. He seemed to be in a long trance, and on top of that he hadn't slid. Went over the home-plate standing up. Tagged out! Burr-r-r!

There are sixteen major-league ball clubs in these United States, which may be giving a little extra credit here and there. Anyhow, on each of these sixteen teams there is always one baby who thinks he's a burglar with the women; that is, one who stands out above the rest. Always a heart-crusher, who believes if he had a set of silk pants and a balcony he could make a stage-hand out of *Romeo*.

On our club this drawing-room desperado was Pete Holden. Pete was a good ball-player and as fresh as a salt breeze. In the field he could go to both sides or come in on a ball with the best of them. There is only one bird, of course, who can really go back on a hit, and that's Tris Speaker. Pete wasn't any Speaker, but he did everything within his ability well and he had a good arm. He could run the pillows, and he stood up to the plate like a little gentleman.

Pete had only one weakness—the ladies. When Pete would go three games without a hit and begin humming ballads around the club-house, looking like a sick calf

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meanwhile, Manager Patsy always was certain he had engineered a new affair. When the little germ was at its height, Pete not only went hitless, but headless.

"The trouble is when you get a girl you couldn't hit a foul if they was pitchin' watermelons at yu," Manager Patsy once said to Pete.

"They is some people aroun' here who wouldn't be satisfied if I hit a home-run every day," replied Pete with spirit.

"I ain't asking yu to hit a home-run every day," said Manager Patsy. "But I ain't goin' to three-cheer you so long as yu think first-base is hid under the water-pail, or when you forget all the rules of the game. Those dames give you funny ideas."

Pete murmured something sarcastic. What was the use?

There was a drug-store blonde with the water-color cheeks in Cleveland. Maybe it wasn't Pete's fault that he didn't know that there was such a thing as a breach-of-promise suit. But ignorance excuses no man, and it was six weeks before Manager Patsy could smooth things over and Pete wasn't a foul ball in any part of the State of Ohio.

In St. Louis there was the diamond-ring scandal. Pete said he had only loaned the ring to the little lady with the triple vamping eye, but it took the police and fire departments almost to get it back for him. In Boston he had arrived in the hotel lobby ten seconds ahead of a near-sighted husband. She had neglected to tell Pete she was married.

It was that way with Pete all over the American League circuit. At the hotel he spent so much time in the telephone booths that the boys used to swear he shaved in 'em.

"It wouldn't be so bad if he didn't swell all out of shape about the dames' hearts he's busted," said Deacon Rathbun sourly.

"Or if he didn't check his noodle with the gate-tender every time he gets a new one," added the manager.

"He's got a fifty-thousand-dollar batting-eye and a ten-cent head," said the Deacon.

"Ten cents is a lot of money for that head," replied Manager Patsy.

"Dames sure is disturbin'," mused the Deacon.

"Until a man learns that one is better'n a hundred," said Manager Patsy, who had a wife Nora and five little Mulligans.

We faced the Athletics again the next afternoon. In the seventh inning we tied the score after a bad start and might have won right there if Pete Holden hadn't succeeded in laying on the straw that broke the Mulligan back.

In that inning Pete was on second with the winning run when Danny Searles hit through the pitching-box for a clean single to center.

With his speed Pete should have scored easily, and would if he hadn't pulled the same trick that he had the day before. He went over the plate standing up and Catcher Jacobs tagged him on the leg as he drifted by.

"You're through, Holden," said Manager Patsy. "Ten days without pay. Beat it!"

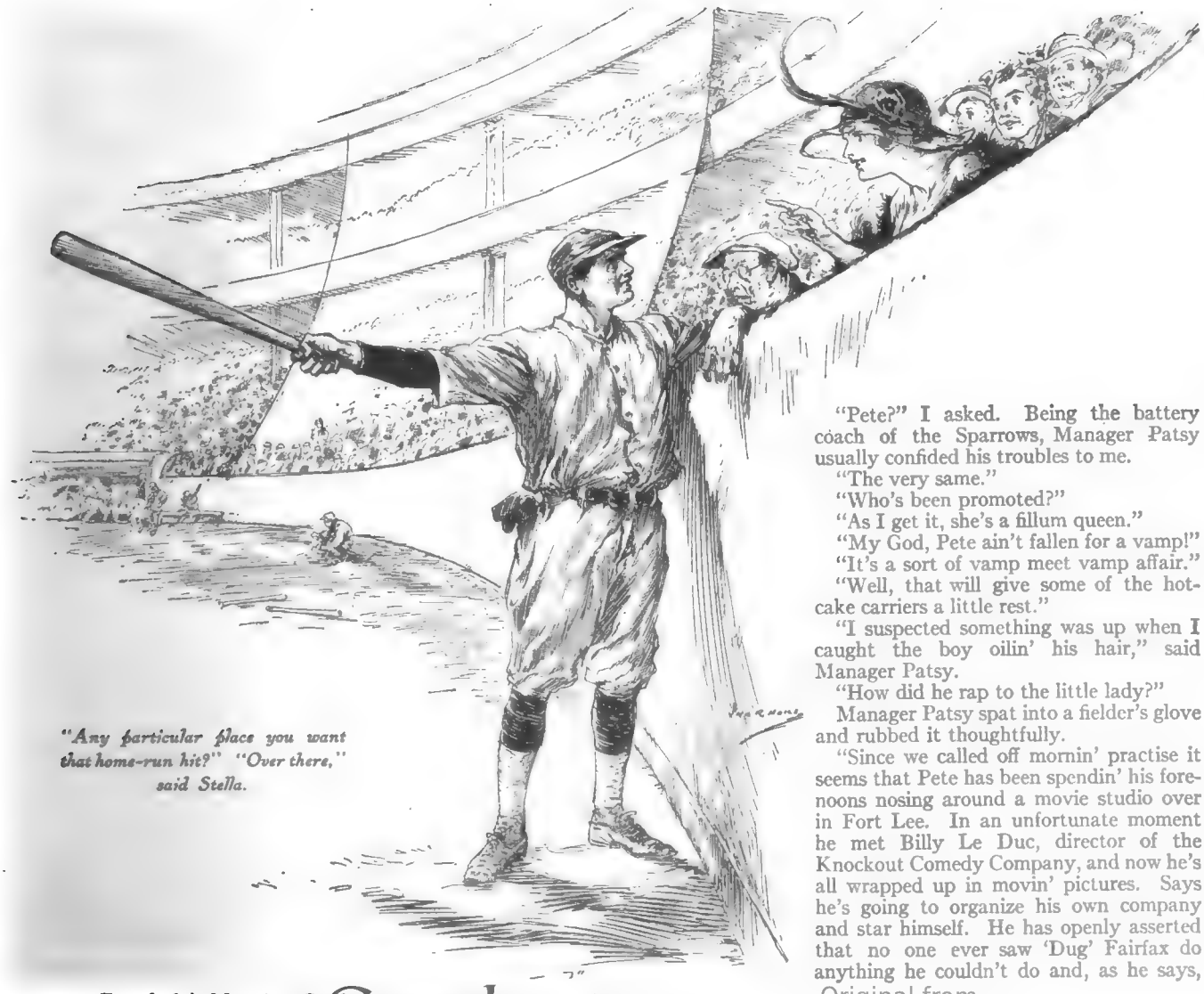
Pete silently retreated toward the clubhouse.

Suggs went to center field, we scored in the ninth, won the game and broke our slump.

II

WITH Pete on the bench and Suggsy in center field we busted along for another week, losing four games and winning two. We were so far off our stride that it would have taken an act of Congress and a half-dozen railroad accidents for us to win any pennant. The truth was that we were missing the cute little three-base wallop that Pete had a way of spreading in the pinches. Suggsy was a nice fielder, but he couldn't hit the size of his lid.

"I've got the low-down on your young heart-crusher," said Manager Patsy to me at the close of one stormy afternoon session when we had lost to Cleveland and slipped back another notch in the league race.



"Any particular place you want that home-run hit?" "Over there," said Stella.

"Pete?" I asked. Being the battery coach of the Sparrows, Manager Patsy usually confided his troubles to me.

"The very same."

"Who's been promoted?"

"As I get it, she's a fillum queen."

"My God, Pete ain't fallen for a vamp!"

"It's a sort of vamp meet vamp affair."

"Well, that will give some of the hot-cake carriers a little rest."

"I suspected something was up when I caught the boy oilin' his hair," said Manager Patsy.

"How did he rap to the little lady?"

Manager Patsy spat into a fielder's glove and rubbed it thoughtfully.

"Since we called off mornin' practise it seems that Pete has been spendin' his forenoons nosing around a movie studio over in Fort Lee. In an unfortunate moment he met Billy Le Duc, director of the Knockout Comedy Company, and now he's all wrapped up in movin' pictures. Says he's going to organize his own company and star himself. He has openly asserted that no one ever saw 'Dug' Fairfax do anything he couldn't do and, as he says,

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'Did any one ever see Fairfax make a three-base hit?' Pete hates those three-base hits."

"Like Bryan hates grape-juice. Who's the siren?"

"I'm coming to that," said Manager Patsy. "Her name is Stella Sinclair. According to Le Duc, she has something to do with the ventilators in the comedy."

"Ventilators," I said; "atmosphere, you mean."

"Sure; she supplies the atmosphere. Anyway Pete meets her at ten o'clock, Le Duc was telling me, and at five minutes after ten he's looking as silly as though they had played the hidden-ball trick on him."

It was true. Pete was again in love—forgetful of the breach-of-promise suit in Cleveland, the diamond ring in St. Louis and the near-sighted husband in Boston.

THE Knockout Comedy Company was not strong for art in its esthetic sense, or in its adhesion to the laws of verity. But if the International Association of Cinemaniacs demanded a snappy climax to its evening's entertainment the K-double-C boys were right there to fill the bill.

They set about capturing smiles, laughs and giggles in a business-like and proficient manner. They had wrecked near-trains and blown up almost-banks to get them. They were first to use a static electric current to make a comedian's hair stand on end. If it were necessary by devious means of photography to run a flivver off a ten-story building, that it might crown the trick policeman down below, whereupon he would flick it from his dome as though a fly were annoying him, this was done. When it came to digging up new business—or situations—everybody handed it to Billy Le Duc, and he handed it to himself just to make it unanimous.

The K-double-C boys didn't care anything about plots. They had one plot. After five years it was only slightly bagging at the knees.

And if the fat man in the fifteenth row poked his neighbor in the ribs, struggled for breath and exclaimed "Oh, Mommer!" Billy Le Duc and the K-double-C boys felt amply rewarded for their painstaking and uncomic efforts.

"Stella Sinclair," I said.

"That's her," replied Manager Patsy.

"What's to be done?" I asked.

"I don't know," replied Manager Patsy fretfully. "A piece of gas-pipe might help."

While we were punching the bag Billy Le Duc came into the club-house.

"Hello, Billy! Meet Pokey Gibbs," said Manager Patsy.

We mitted each other.

"I was just telling Pokey about Pete," continued Mister Mulligan.

Le Duc smiled dryly. He was slim and short and wore, among other things, a colored collar with stripes. Like most unathletic professionals, he was a devout worshiper of baseball.

"It's too bad," said Director Le Duc, "for while he may be a good baseball-player, as an actor he is Premium the First."

"Premium the First?"

"Yep, a'ham," continued Le Duc. "Now if I can do anything——"

"You can that—that's just the reason I invited you here this afternoon," replied Manager Mulligan. In the old pagan's eye there was a crafty look, as though he were about to double-cross Tom Connolly.

"Say the word."

"To begin with Pete is what we used to call out in the Pacific Coast League a grand-stand player," said Manager Patsy. "There are a few of them birds get by in the big league or anywhere else, and those that do cut out their high-trapeze and horizontal-bar work if they stick."

"Yaha."

"Well, Pete ain't never been cured. He'd still like to have Queen Mary and King George in a box at the Polo Grounds every afternoon so he could feel there was some real reason for him to exert himself. Do you follow me?"

"I've already scored," replied the director.

"If we kick off another game to Cleveland, we drop into the second division," said Patsy.

"I'll have Stella Sinclair and the K-double-C outfit in a box at the right of the Sparrows' dug-out to-morrow," promised the comedy director.

"Cleveland will be all out of luck if you do," answered Mister Mulligan. "Pete has been warming the bench now long enough to be uneasy. When he sees his movie friends in the box, he'll be crazy to play. I won't notice him until game time, and then I'll tell him he can go to center field if he thinks he can hold it down without a rolling chair."

"The rest is easy," said Le Duc, bowing himself out.

"Y' know, Pokey," mused Manager Patsy, "I wouldn't wonder if Pete was treading on some one's toes with this here comedy queen."

"Le Duc?"

"Didn't y' notice his eyes just about matched his necktie?"

"He had on a green tie," I said.

III

PETE made baseball history the next day. In the morning Stella Sinclair told him the Knockout Comedy Company had declared a holiday and was going to visit the Polo Grounds.

It was plain to the eye that Pete had a temperature of approximately 105 when he arrived at the club-house that afternoon. He made a play for Patsy Mulligan several times, but the manager passed him up with a cold and uncompromising look.

"I sure feel like I could slap that ole apple for about nine bases," said Pete to Deacon Rathbun loud enough for Manager Patsy to hear.

"Was I telling you, Pokey," said Manager Patsy without blinking, "that orders from Ban Johnson are to the effect that they are to be shot on sight?"

"Some more of the czar stuff," I said, wondering what Patsy was talking about.

"I think he's right, at that," said Manager Patsy, while the Sparrows pricked up their ears. "He believes in shooting 'em in full view of the audience."

"There might be objections," I replied, stalling.

"How could there be?" said Manager Patsy spiritedly. "Hanging or the chair would be too gentle."

"Maybe," I said.

"If a guy won't slide to a base, he deserves to be shot," declared Patsy with finality.

There was a grim silence in Pete's corner.

While we were warming up, Pete was a sad dog. He had no sooner reached the field than Stella Sinclair, Billy Le Duc and the rest of the K-double-C troopers tripped down to a box beside the Sparrows' dug-out, extending Pete noisy greetings and salutations. The Sinclair dame had big, wide-apart eyes and seemed to be a blonde by premeditation.

"I hope you hit a home-run," she said.

"I dunno," answered Pete, leaning over the box. "My arm is aching terrible."

"But you're going to play, ain't you?"

"I want to," declared Pete truthfully, "but the trouble is Old Hatchet-Face don't want me to."

"Hatchet-Face?"

"The hyena who's managing us."

"Mister Mulligan?"

"That's what he calls hisself."

"The mean thing! I'll go right down and speak to him about it."

"Don't do that," warned Pete. "It'd be like him to insult a lady."

"The cat-fish!" said Stella acidly.

"Besides, I don't care," continued Pete. "The more I think of movin' pictures the less I think of baseball. I may not be no Appolonaris on looks, but I ain't no cripple either. I can jump as many fences as the next one, and who ever saw any of them birds make a three-base hit?"

Le Duc groaned.

"I wouldn't have come out here in the first place if I'd known you had a sore arm," said Stella.

It was five minutes before game time when Manager Patsy broke the news.

"Holden," he began, "this game don't mean much and it looks like we ain't going to have much of a crowd to-day, so I think I'll take another chance with you in center field."

"Thank you," gulped Pete.

"If you forget to slide again, we won't have to pay so much money back," continued Manager Patsy.

In ten seconds Pete was in front of the K-double-C's box.

"Any particular place you want that home-run hit?"

"Over there," said Stella, indicating the roof over the right-field grand stand. "But I thought your arm ached."

"It does," replied Pete, "but on account of the importance of this game and the size of the crowd the suckers can't get along without me."

Le Duc moaned.

"Go to it, old dear," said Stella gaily.

PROBABLY love gives man the strength to slay giants and things. I don't know. I remember the year I met Mrs. Gibbs I led the Brotherhood in doubles. Anyway, as every Polo Grounder knows, Joe Jackson and Babe Ruth are the only birds who ever hit a ball over the roof of the right-field grand stand at the Polo Grounds.

That is, they were until the second inning of the game that afternoon. That is when Pete first came to bat. He got hold of a fast ball, shoulder high, that Robinson, the Indians' pitcher, slipped him. It was one of those hits that resemble an expert golfer's drive, in that the ball after it had traveled one hundred yards seemed to gather new momentum and irresistibly rise instead of fall. It cleared the roof of the grand stand with a dozen feet to spare.

(*Continued on page 80*)

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Barrel, motion-picture director, baseball-manager and star center-fielder began a dizzying slide down the muddy Palisades.

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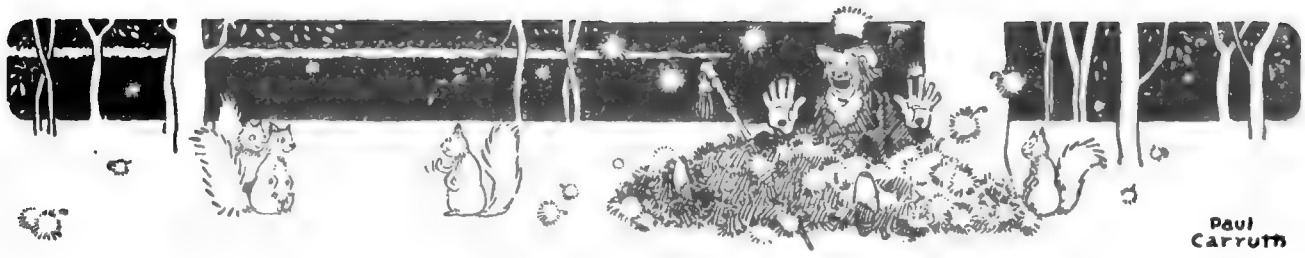


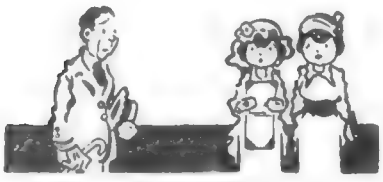
Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree

AFTER a salesman had sold a big order of goods to the Scotch buyer for a Chicago store, he sought to make the Scot a present of a box of cigars.

"I'm sorry I canna accept," the Scot said, "but there's a rule of the hoose that ye canna take presents from salesmen."

"Well," laughed the salesman, "I'll sell them to you for five cents then."

"That's different now," the canny buyer replied after taking a good sniff at the box. "I can buy my smokes anywhere I please. I'll take four boxes."



"Lend me your rubber, May."

BOOTH TARKINGTON was strolling around an artistic Red Cross fair when two young ladies came up and asked him for his autograph.

"I haven't a fountain pen," he said, much flattered. "Will pencil do?"

"Yes," said one of the young ladies, whereupon he took out a pencil and signed his name in the morocco-bound book that she presented.

The young lady studied the signature with a frown. Then she looked up and asked:

"Aren't you Robert W. Chambers?"

"No," he said, "I'm Booth Tarkington."

The young lady turned to her friend with a shrug of disgust. "Lend me your rubber, May," she said.

THE new minister, a chronic dyspeptic, was taking supper with the Baileys. It was a very formal occasion for them, and the whole family, including little Bill, were supposed to be on their best behavior.

"Have some roast pork!" said Big Bill heartily to the guest.

"No-o, thank you; pork doesn't agree with me," was the languid reply.

"Try some pickled tongue, then."

"No-o, I guess not."

"Baked beans?"

"No-o, thank you."

"Have some of this jelly!"

"No-o, I never eat sweets."

By this time little Bill was genuinely concerned. He leaned over and got his father's attention.

"I wonder if the old codger would suck an egg?" he suggested.

EDITOR'S NOTE—Though the sign is the Chestnut Tree, no story is barred by its youth. We will gladly pay for usable ones. Address all manuscripts to "The Chestnut Tree," enclosing stamped, addressed envelope.

WHEN the boys assembled for their game of ball, Bobby, the pitcher, was missing. Jimmy was sent to investigate.

"Is Bobby at home?" he asked the sister who answered his knock.

"Course he is," she answered. "Don't you see his shirt on the line?"

FOLLOWING inspection the commanding officer of a negro regiment was making a speech to his men in which he warned them that, while courtesy, is necessary at times, one should always use tact in one's relations with other people.

Talking together afterward, two of the colored soldiers were discussing the difference between courtesy and tact.

"Well," said one, "Ah can't 'splain the difference but Ah knows. Fo de wah Ah was a plumber and one day a lady calls me on de phone and sez, 'Hurry right down heah, the baft-tub done sprung a leak,' and down Ah rushes. Ah bust right in de front do' and up the back stairs into de baftroom. And, boy, there was a lady in the tub. And Ah jest speaks right up, sez Ah, 'Good mawnin,' SIR!' Now that there 'good mawnin'' was courtesy, but the 'sir' was *tact*."

"Rent me Jones' house. He is drowning over there in the lake."

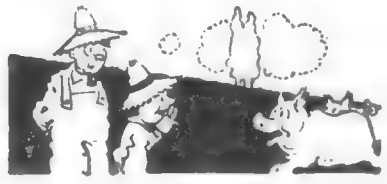
SMITH, after a long siege of unsuccessful flat hunting, thought a stroll on the beach would relieve his mind. He had not gone far when he discovered a man drowning. On closer observation he saw it was his neighbor, Jones. Instead of offering assistance to his drowning friend he rushed up-town to the real estate-agent's office, dashed madly in and excitedly called to the agent, saying: "Rent me Jones's house! He is drowning over there in the lake."

The agent looked at him, slowly shook his head, and replied: "Sorry sir, I can't accommodate you; but I just rented it to the man that pushed him in."

THE glitter and noise of the vaudeville enraptured Tommy, aged six, but his comments on the performance visibly embarrassed his parents and frequently diverted the audience.

The show closed with an acrobatic act in which a spangled little lady performed daring gymnastic feats. Her final accomplishment was to swing gracefully by one toe from a perilous trapeze; but the effect missed fire when Tommy turned to his mother, a middle-aged matron of comfortable proportions, and demanded shrilly:

"Ma, can you do that?"



Has to get someone to call his hogs.

IN THE county court-room of a little town in Indiana a witness was being cross-examined regarding the character of the prisoner at bar.

"What do you know against the prisoner?" was the question.

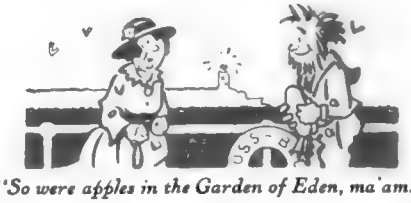
"Can't say as I know anything against him."

"Did you ever know him to tell any lies to any one?"

"Can't say as I did."

"Well," demanded the attorney with some impatience, "what can you say as to his character, anyway?"

"If you put it that way, now," the witness told him deliberately, "I can say this. Never knew him to tell no lies; never knew nothing much against him directly. But when it comes time to feed his hogs he has to get somebody else to call 'em for him."



"So were apples in the Garden of Eden, ma'am."

A SAILOR had been showing an old lady over a large liner, and after thanking him, she suddenly remarked:

"I see that, according to the ship's orders, tips are forbidden."

The sailor, turning to the visitor with a knowing look, answered:

"Why, bless yer, ma'am, so were apples in the Garden of Eden."

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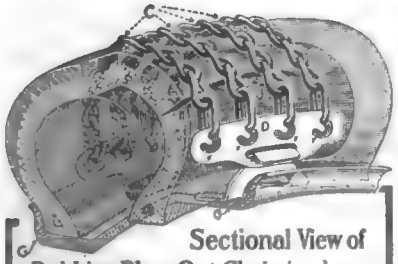
Three Automobile Necessities

Weed Tire Chains, Weed Chain-Jacks and Dobbins Blow-Out Chains



Sectional View of Dobbins Blow-Out Chain in place

A - Main Plate
B - Bent Lip on Main Plate
C - Cross Chains
D - Second Plate
E - Auxiliary Hook
F - Curved Slots permitting adjustment for due amount of tension
G - Rim of wheel
H - Inner Patch
J - Blow-out

PRICE LIST

$1.00 each for 3″ and 3½″ tires
1.50 " " 4″ and 4½″ "
1.75 " " 5, 5½ and 6″ "

If your dealer does not have them, write us and we will see that your needs are supplied

*"**Weed Tire Chains**,* Mr.————, have safeguarded you and your family from skidding accidents for many years. They've given your cars traction in sand, mud, snow and on wet, greasy, slippery pavements. They are good old friends, indeed.

*"**Weed Chain-Jacks*** have minimized the labor of tire changing for you and your wife. To lift a car with a Weed Chain-Jack, you give a few easy pulls on its endless chain. To lower, you simply pull the chain in the opposite direction. Up or down, there's no labor.

*"**Dobbins Blow-Out Chains*** complete the trio of 'Auto Necessities.' They are often referred to as a 'Spare Tire in the Tool Box.' When your last spare tire 'goes bang,' you don't have to run on the rims or wait on the road for a new shoe. You can quickly and securely hold the worst blow-out with this wonderful device and go merrily on your way. You'll try them? Good! They only cost $1.50 for your 4½ inch tires. Yes, that includes an inner patch. You also want a folder descriptive of them to give to a friend. I am sorry to say that I haven't one left. I'll order a supply of them today from the

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In Canada: Dominion Chain Company, Limited, Niagara Falls, Ontario

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The "Bee-Vac," with 20 per cent greater suction than the average cleaner, "gets all the dirt." It picks up threads, ravelings, hairs and paper scraps. It weighs but a trifle over 10 pounds—a child can carry it anywhere, and operate it, too. Its gear-driven, reverse-revolving brush loosens up imbedded dirt and makes thorough cleaning easy.

The "Bee-Vac" is sold at an extraordinarily low price by responsible dealers everywhere. If your dealer doesn't have the "Bee-Vac," we will gladly send you descriptive literature and tell you where to see it demonstrated.

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650 W. Lake St.
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The HEART-CRUSHER

(*Continued from page 76*)

The crowd roared. No emperor ever rode down the Appian Way with more pride than Pete strutted about the bases and crossed to the bench, doffing his cap and smiling broadly at Stella Sinclair. Le Duc was pale as a mackerel.

"Welcome home," said Manager Patsy unsmilingly.

"It's born in 'em," I added.

"I'd made a lot more of the same if y' hadn't kept me chained to the bench all week," replied Pete.

"You'll never have to slide if you keep hitting 'em like that," I said, trying to promote peace.

"But if he don't hit 'em, Pokey, and he don't slide—well, I have Ban Johnson's orders," said Manager Patsy grimly.

"Tell this here Johnson to go chase himself," replied Pete airily. "Does he draw the crowds in these parks?"

It was the beginning of a field day for Pete. He gathered two triples and sewed up the game with a double in the eighth with two on. He made a shoestring catch off Graney in the sixth and cut off two runs with throws to the plate that couldn't have been dreamed any better. He concluded the grand afternoon performance and concert by stealing home while Robinson held the ball. It was a day the memory of which a ball-player is supposed to preserve for his grand-children, and for the team-owner next winter when he is walloping him for a raise in salary.

The Red Sox lost that day, which put us again in third place, but three and one-half games behind the White Sox, who were leading.

MANAGER Patsy met Billy Le Duc on the Speedway back of the Stadium after the game.

"It worked," said the director. But he did not seem happy.

"Sure, but that ain't all," answered Manager Patsy.

"Is there another reel?"

"There is. I don't figure the Sparrows can afford to pay the K-double-C to appear at the Polo Grounds rain or shine every afternoon."

"Not if we continue to do comedy flops for the customers."

"Then it looks as if we would have to cure Pete of his present ambition to become a fillum star. Sort of alienate his affections. Isn't there some way that could be done?"

"I was thinking of that," said the director. "We might give him the work."

"Frame on him?"

"Sure, give him the air."

"It would be a terrible blow to you motion-picture people if Pete would be treated so rough that he would get sore and never act no more."

"And wouldn't do anything but play baseball."

"Terrible," said Manager Patsy.

"Terrible," echoed Le Duc.

When the pair had finished scheming, it was arranged that Manager Patsy and some of the boys were to meet Billy Le Duc on the Palisades in Jersey on the following morning. We were to be in at the finish and help laugh Pete out of the fillum business.

"Pete may recover, but he will never look the same," said Le Duc, departing for his pink limousine.

"Don't let anything bigger than the City Hall fall on him," admonished Manager Patsy.

IV

THE next morning Manager Patsy, Deacon Rathbun, Danny Searles, Larry Simmons and myself boarded the 130th Street Ferry and stepped off in New Jersey.

We promoted a bus and started up the long hill that leads to the outskirts of Fort Lee.

"Actor," sniffs Deacon Rathbun. "If he's a actor, I can bake a cake."

At the appointed hour and the designated spot we met Billy Le Duc, wearing puttees. He came toward us hastily with glances over his shoulder.

"Ye gods!" he exclaimed.

"Has Pete been killed?" asked Manager Patsy.

"No, but he's harder to ruin than a dollar watch. This morning we told him we were going to start a two-reeler with him as the star. He took it all as a matter of course and asked: 'Do you want me to play it with a Chaplin or a Lloyd finish?' "

"Gimme air," murmured Deacon Rathbun.

"First we worked the custard-pie gag on him," continued Le Duc. "He was standing behind the guy that was supposed to be hit, but the first guy ducked. It was a juicy one. Then he rode Elijah. He took everything that mule could send and sobbed for more. After that we tried him out on a flivver, our well-known trust-to-Providence-Rhode-Island motor-car. He went through two barns without turning a hair. The boy is good."

"You must be wasting a lot of fillum," said Manager Patsy.

"If it was on the level, we would be; I'm almost sorry it ain't. We'll never get anybody who can spoil so much scenery in one day."

"Ain't you even using a camera?"

"We got the box all right. But we're shooting blanks."

"Ever try a torpedo?" asked Manager Patsy.

Le Duc described the finishing touch which was calculated to forever cure Pete of his pictorial fever. He had arranged a chase along the Palisades which was to culminate with Pete jumping into a barrel on the roadside. The flivver police patrol, loaded with six-dollar-a-day super coppers who were chasing him, was supposed to do some highway acrobatics, according to the usual formula of slow cranking.

Seemingly by accident the flivver patrol was to bump the barrel, containing Pete, and send it rolling over the Palisades.

"It's an old gag and we've used this location a dozen times," said Le Duc. "When the barrel goes over the Palisades, which are sandy here, it only rolls ten or fifteen feet, for we plant supers there to stop it. Then we substitute a dummy and shoot the barrel all the way down."

"I get you," declared Manager Patsy.

"Of course the work of the supers is

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important," exclaimed the director. "If they didn't stop the barrel, it would continue to roll on down the side of the Palisades, which are nice and muddy now on account of the rain. The chances are it wouldn't stop until it hit the Hudson."

"Who are them supers that are going to stop this barrel?" demanded Manager Patsy.

"I was thinking maybe you boys would like the job," replied Le Duc.

"Our club fielding average is .987," replied the manager.

"Here they come," said Le Duc, hastily retreating.

"Thirty days' pay for anybody that lays a finger on that barrel," said Manager Patsy, gazing down the steep incline which abutted the Hudson.

WE HID behind trees while Pete rehearsed his big scene. He was no longer deceived as to the hardships of making pictures. But, although dog-tired, he preserved his verbal freshness. He was hogging the show. True to the accepted custom of his new profession, he was complaining of the scarcity of inserts of "close-ups" that were being made of him. In real moving-pictures, it was plain, Pete would eventually be known as a lens louse.

"Lee Duck," he complained, "you should get a close-up of me when I hop into the barrel."

"Yes?"

"Then, when I'm in the barrel peeking out, you could get another close-up, Lee Duck."

"Le Duc not Lee Duck," admonished the director.

"Oh, that's baseball," said Stella.

"And when the fliv noses me over the hill, tell the shoff to go easy, Lee Duck," continued Pete, unmindful. "I gotta play ball this afternoon. If anything should happen, I never could square it with that fat-head Mulligan."

"The pigeon-toed, hump-backed cuttle-fish!" whispered Manager Patsy hoarsely from behind his tree.

Pete, with Stella Sinclair, went down the road to begin the sprint which was to end with a leap into the barrel. Le Duc, coming back, directed us to our position.

"There's hardly a ripple on the Hudson," he said meditatively. Then he looked down the road where Pete was gassing Stella Sinclair. Again his eyes seemed to match his necktie.

"We'll try to remedy that," replied Manager Patsy.

"It can be done," said Le Duc.

"It will be," declared Manager Patsy. It was.

It was a good chase. Pete came down the road with a flivver full of trick coppers buzzing after him. With a flying leap he made the barrel. The motor pulled a bluff at losing the trail.

While it was doing some highway gymnastics Le Duc walked to the barrel, supposedly to give Pete his final instructions. As they were talking, Pete gave one look to assure himself that the supers, who were to stop him, were in position. He gazed straight into the wrathful eyes of Manager Patrick Michael Mulligan.

"Wait!" screamed Pete.

"Fat-head, am I?" roared Manager Patsy.

"It's a frame-up," wailed Pete, struggling to free himself from the barrel.

Too late! Le Duc signaled the flivver. With a stiff nudge it sent the barrel and Pete spinning over the edge of the Palisades.

But not before Pete, in desperation, had seized the thing nearest to him. This happened to be the coat collar of Director Billy Le Duc.

Down they came. We melted before them. That is, we melted with the exception of Manager Patsy. Not so spry as in his salad days, the old pagan had not reckoned with the speed of the flying barrel. It struck him amidships. He popped into the air. Barrel, motion-picture director, baseball-manager and star center-fielder began a dizzying slide down the muddy Palisades.

It looked first as though Manager Patsy was going to win the race to the Hudson. But he became tangled in a prickly bush and was delayed. Pete was bounding along nicely, but the barrel collided with a charred stump. He almost stopped going. With a clear path to the shallow waters near shore Director Le Duc finished first, with Pete a good second and Manager Patsy a close third.

That was the order in which they climbed out.

Director Le Duc paused and looked back. He saw Pete brandishing a fist at him. The director started to run, with Pete chasing him and Manager Patsy, creaking in every joint, chasing Pete.

"A little warm, a little warm," said Deacon Rathbun. "The next ferry leaves in seven minutes and I'm thinking I'll get it."

V

MANAGER PATSY and Pete did not arrive at the Polo Grounds until game time. Pete had a slight limp and was nursing a bruised nose. Manager Patsy's face was scratched worse than the writing-desk in a country hotel.

The next morning the *Telegraph* carried an announcement that work at the K-double-C studio had been temporarily suspended because of an accident which befell Director William M. Le Duc while staging a thrilling chase along the Palisades. It also carried an announcement of the engagement of Stella Sinclair, the well-known comedy star, to the director.

"Too bad," said Deacon Rathbun. "I guess Pete won't have anything to do but play ball for three or four days."

The next day the heart-crusher lined out two triples that beat Cleveland and again put us in the pennant running. Both Pete and Manager Patsy continued uncommonly reticent.

Once Danny Searles started a funny crack about Fort Lee and the Palisades.

"It's been a long time since I fined anybody on this club a hundred berries," said Manager Patsy casually. "But, by the wrinkles on the back of a six-legged elephant, I ain't forgot how."

An announcement of interest to lovers of good fiction appears on page 60, this issue.

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I'LL SHOW YOU THE TOWN

(Continued from page 44)

staying at the Hotel Susan B. Anthony."

"She was," said Bonner. "That was where I called her, and they told me she'd moved to the Ritz."

"The world goes round," I murmured. "It undeniably does. Well—you called her at the Ritz——"

"And asked her when I could come to see her," Bonner continued. "She said I couldn't come. She was busy. I figured I'd never get her to the showrooms if she was as busy as that, so finally I wheedled her into lettin' me drop around and show her the mid-year. That was all right; she told me to pick her up at one of these gold-mounted costumers' on the Avenue in the fifties. I thought she must be some lady; I thought it again and twice over when I saw her. You have certainly got the eye, Doc."

I perceived that Agnes had not been idle.

"SO WE blew out over the Queensboro Bridge," said Bonner, "and when we got out a little ways I asked her if she liked fast goin'. Sure she liked it. So I'd got up to about forty-eight when she grabbed me by the shoulder—nearly slewed us off into the ditch—and told me to slow down. 'This car's good for seventy-five,' I said, 'or maybe a little more.' 'If you go faster than twenty again, I'll scream,' she says. Guess she thought I was one of these kidnapers she sees in the movies. Well, let me tell you. We strolled around for a couple of hours, with my car gettin' all insulted because it had to crawl when it wanted to burn things up, while I told her all its good points. And for everything I said she had a comeback. She didn't like the Sagamore. It was too shiny, she says—though I'd picked a quiet gunmetal body that I thought would suit her. 'All right,' I says, 'we'll sell you one that's sandpapered.' That didn't make much of a hit, she don't seem to have a sense of humor. Not a kick about the price, but a kick about everything that makes the price; said the car was too big, and too fast, and too comfortable. She says all this was unnecessary; it was foolish.

" 'I get you,' I says. 'You want something slow and ladylike.' 'Exactly,' she says. 'We make the best truck on the market,' I says, but not to her. I choked that up in my throat, because I figured there might be a chance yet. So I spread the soft stuff all the way in to town, and finally she said I could have another afternoon of demonstration some day next week. Get that? It won't be me. Some of my bright young men get the pleasant task of hearing her tell us how rotten a car we make. Too big, too fast, too good-lookin'! Huh! And yet I drop her, on the way back, at the flossiest lingerie shop on Fifty-seventh Street. Some things she seems to like good-lookin'."

"She doesn't quite know how to spend her money yet," I apologized. "And she has quite a good deal of it."

"Doc, I don't care how much money she's got or how good she looks—that woman is a hick by nature. I've seen 'em before, the ones that got rich; and it makes no difference. Born a hick always a hick. God A'mighty made that woman to ride in a spring wagon, and if she was worth forty million dollars it wouldn't make any difference. Now, Doc, you're a good guy, but you've always got your nose in some book, and you don't know some little things that have kind of come to a man that's been married three times to two women. I know all about women—all there is. My wives were two different kinds, and I've seen some others; but there's no kind I'd as soon not marry as this kind. That woman would have her foot on your neck from morning till night. The millions may look pretty good now, Doc; but take it from one who knows, you'll sell your soul if you ever wed that dame."

What could I say? If I said I didn't want to marry her, I might have to go into long explanations; and in some directions, Bonner's was a one-cylinder mind.

I STROLLED into the lobby of the Ritz at six o'clock, with the tickets for "Grapefruit, Coffee and Rolls" in my waistcoat pocket. To-night, Agnes would expect evening dress and the corresponding habit of mind, and I was conscientiously doing my best to look and act like John Drew. My spirits rose when, after sending word that she would be down immediately, she kept me waiting twenty minutes. Punctuality had been one of her rustic vices. Yes, she was learning. But I didn't realize how much she'd learned in two days till she stepped out of the elevator.

Somebody had taken charge of the pale gold hair and fluffed it out a little, and arrayed it about her head like a gilded helmet. By this time she'd learned how to use powder without letting it show, and she'd used it wherever desirable on her face and neck and shoulders. Yes, her shoulders—Agnes Clevenger's shoulders—shoulders, to say the least. Her gown had a sort of cuirass of pale blue silk above the waist, and a skirt of pale blue silk covered with billows of silver net, like spun sugar. A single thickness of the net was flung over one plump shoulder, and over the other there was nothing at all but a string of silver beads.

Anything else? Oh, yes. The skirt stopped six or eight inches above the floor; her stockings were of pale blue silk, embroidered with silver butterflies; and she had about twenty dollars' worth of slipper on each foot.

And she was coming toward me with an appeal in her eyes. Appeal is too mild a word; it was a requisition. She wanted two things: Abject, instant idolatry was one of them; but before that, she wanted to be told by somebody she knew—by a Deupree—that she hadn't committed an unpardonable sin, that she wasn't a Scarlet Woman.

I caught her bare hands with the most adoringly deferential manner I could accomplish, and said:

"You wonderful creature! If anybody had told me that a woman could dress in the perfection of the mode and still look like an angel of purity! You're the most beautiful woman in New York!"

And she was, pretty nearly—especially when she blushed and whispered:

"Not so loud! Everybody's looking at us."

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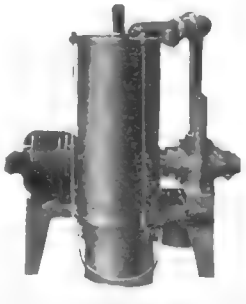

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"Wherever you go to-night," I said, "everybody will look at you. Do you wonder that I begged you to let the world see your real self?" For, now that the grand transformation scene had been accomplished, I didn't want her to forget who had made her what she was to-night.

A bellboy appeared about this time with a white-ribbed cloak lined with rose silk, and I slipped it over her shoulders. As my fingers brushed her skin I felt that she was trembling. Poor girl! It had been rather an ordeal for her, I knew; her naked soul could have faced its Maker on the judgment day with a great deal of self-possession, but when she laid bare those alabaster shoulders to a lobby full of people she must have felt very, very nude.

SHE deserved a party as a reward for all this, so I did my best. We dined in a hotel roof-garden, with palms and soft lights, and a view over the city in the night; we ate a dinner selected with all the finesse at my command; afterward we lingered at our table while I smoked a cigar, and an orchestra played melodies from the musical comedies, and Agnes contemplated the crowd with the comfortable certainty that she was not only the most virtuous and high-minded, but the best-looking woman in the house. It was the sort of scene you see in the three-color inserts in the advertising section, recommending a brand of high-priced cigarets. Agnes was quite thrilled.

The theatre lobby provided more thrills and a gratifying supply of envious stares from other women. And then we were in our seats, and looking over the programs.

" 'Grapefruit, Coffee and Rolls,' " said Agnes. "What a strange title! Something modern, I presume. Of course—the program says——"

I looked a second time. The program said that Act I was in the living-room of the Willoughbys' house on Long Island, on a June evening; Act II, the Willoughbys' bedroom a few hours later; Act III the same, the next morning.

That little devil Hazel had put something over on me.

"I have never seen it," I said, "but it was recommended by friends of my cousin Mrs. Torrey. Perhaps you know her—she was Edith Deupree."

"I have never had the pleasure," said Agnes. "But I have no doubt she is well acquainted with the modern drama. I—I am ashamed to say it, but I have seen nothing more recent than 'Ben Hur.' "

Well—"Grapefruit, Coffee and Rolls" was at least two thousand years more recent. That was evident in the beginning of the first act. For a quarter of an hour I tobogganed from depth to deeper depth of despair. Agnes would faint; she would rise and ask me to take her away; worse, she would walk away without speaking to me. But she didn't. She gasped and started now and then at some of the lines, but in general she seemed quite calm, so calm that when the curtain had come down, I gathered courage to ask her if she liked it.

"Why—yes," she said. "It is, of course, quite different from anything I have seen, but as I said, I am not in touch with the stage of to-day. It is valuable as an education. Of course, the theme is somewhat unpleasant; but I feel that serious-minded discussion of such problems is broadening."

It was well that she felt that way; I knew that something broader was to come. And Act II lived up to expectations. It was funny, of course; but I had to swallow every laugh for fear of driving Agnes to the midnight train for Indianapolis. Agnes didn't laugh, but she leaned forward and got everything; and after what would have seemed five minutes if I'd been alone, but was not less than a thousand years in the present company, the curtain came down again. Agnes began to study the program; hiding her blushes, I concluded.

"Let me see," she mused. "Gowns—hats—here it is. Boudoir garments by Maison Mazola. Would you mind noting that down for me, Doctor Deupree? I have no pencil."

After that I had no more worries; and the third act speedily did its conciliatory best to atone for the second act's wicked worst. And then it was over, and we were moving toward the door.

"You'll go to supper, of course," I said. "Biltmore—the Plaza—or would you prefer to go back to the Ritz?"

Agnes thought it over.

"I think," she said, "that I should like to go to Rector's."

"Rector's?" I gasped. "Why in the world——"

"Haven't you ever been there?"

"Oh, yes. I've been there. But I hadn't thought of it as the sort of place you'd care for——"

"Of course, Doctor Deupree, I disapprove of such places and the spirit that makes them possible quite as much as you do. In Indianapolis, if we had such a place, I should never dream of allowing myself to be seen there. And I shouldn't do it here if any one whom I knew—But the feeling I have is this: We are in New York. Such places are a part of New York life. And we who are striving for the better can not exert our best influence unless we understand the problem that is to be faced. So I thought that Rector's, or some similar place——"

"Come on," I said. "We're going to the Zanzibar."

THE Zanzibar, in those days before prohibition, was the wildest place that Times Square could show. People went there when they were thrown out anywhere else—at least, some people did; and more people went to see those people. Considering that even the Zanzibar had to close at one o'clock, the crowd managed to accomplish a good deal of sinful gaiety. To-night, as it happened, was rather tame. It seemed that word had been sent that the Zanzibar had been getting a little too rough, and that something would happen if things were not toned down; but that didn't spoil Agnes's innocent pleasure. It looked sinful enough to her even with the damper on.

Her eyes were popping as we checked our wraps, strolled through the lurid lobby, and mounted the stairs to the ballroom. On the landing she stopped in front of the full-length glass to look at herself, and I heard a little satisfied sigh as she took my arm to go on. We got a table at the edge of the dancing floor, and I looked over the wine list.

"Let me see it," said Agnes. "I am

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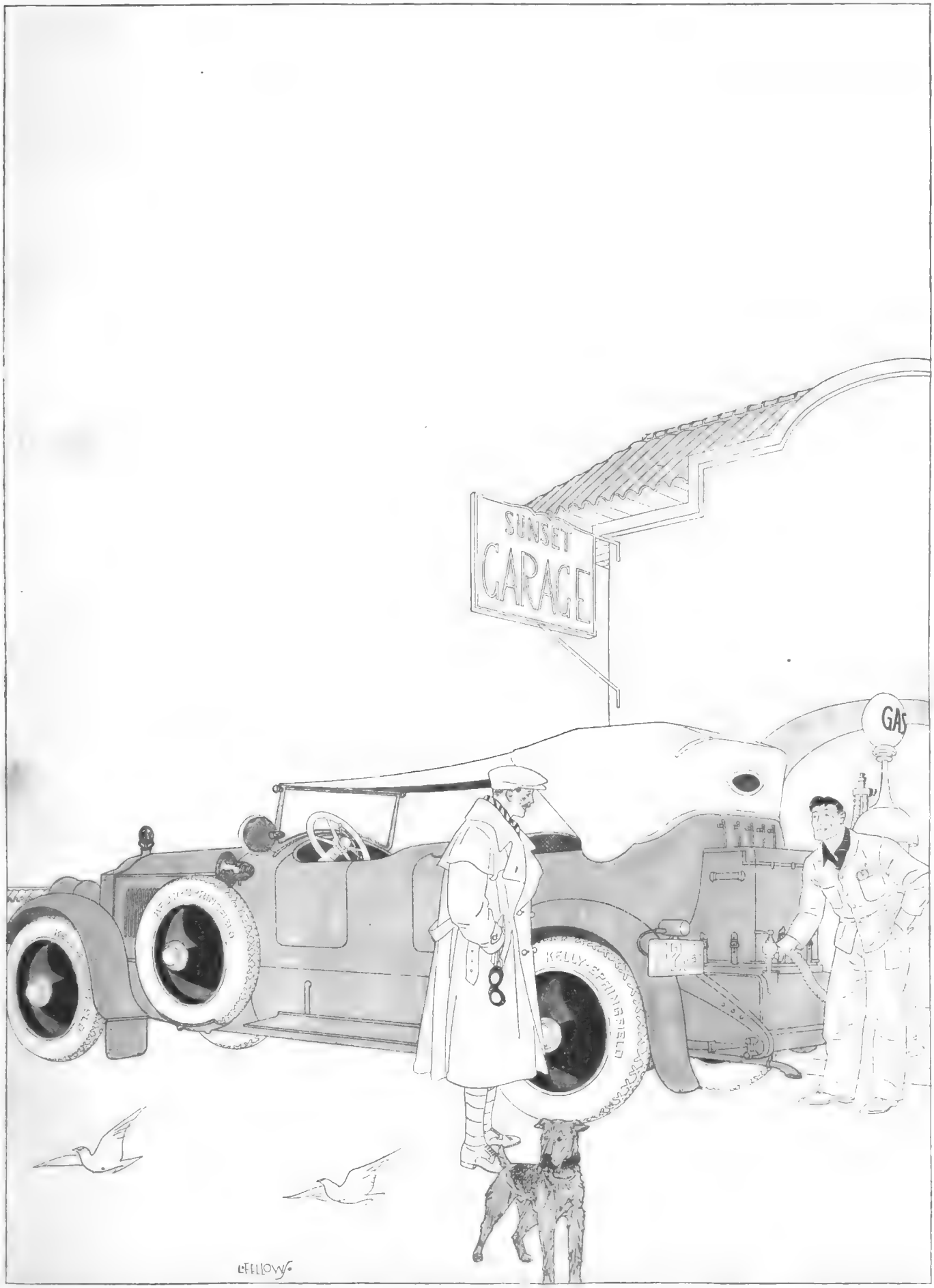

"You've come all the way from New York to San Francisco without a blowout? Those must be some tires you have!"

"They are. Kelly-Springfields, you know."

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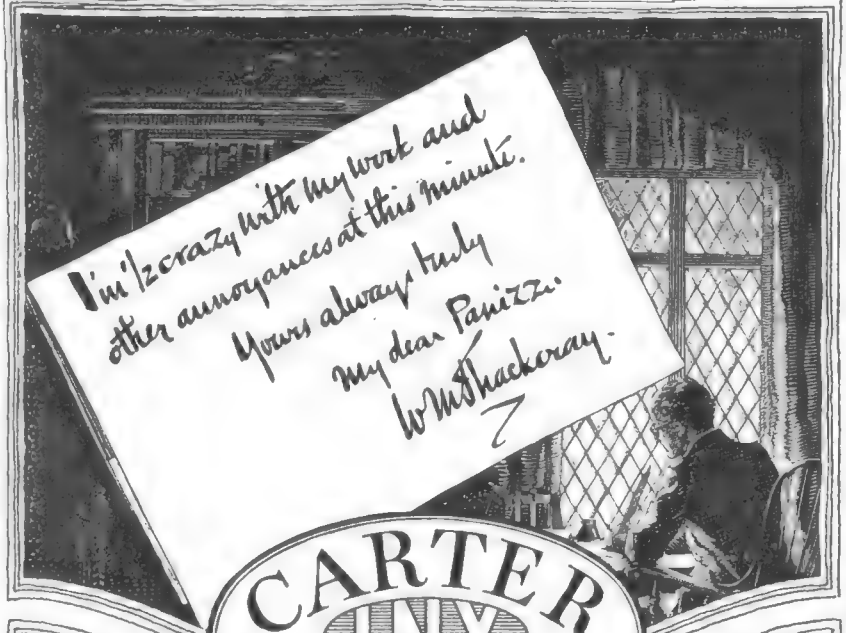

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curious to know what such a thing looks like."

"You can order a lemonade," I suggested. "You won't find it on the card, but they'll give it to you."

She sighed.

"How fortunate it is that all these wines and liquors are soon to be abolished! I never could quite understand the fascination they have for their victims. To think that I have never known the taste of wine——"

"You'll take a lemonade," I interrupted brutally. "They're all going to be abolished anyway, so it won't make any difference whether you understand the fascination or not." For I was confident that after one drink Agnes would have to be taken away in an ambulance; and when I next crossed her path it wouldn't be the fascination that she'd think of.

She submitted, though the original Eve took it rather badly; and I ordered a club sandwich and a pot of coffee. I hardly expected to say or do anything this evening that might be regarded as riotous; but certainly I wasn't going to make it possible for her to ascribe any action or any remark to the fumes of liquor.

When we had disposed of our frugal meal, I ordered another pot of coffee, to get rid of the waiter who was breathing on the back of my neck; and after Agnes had looked around to make sure that nobody from Indianapolis was present, we settled down to enjoy the evening. Agnes was having a wonderful time. Until a few days ago she'd considered it wasteful and foolish to wear even decently made clothes; to dine at expensive restaurants, no matter how respectable; to stay out after dark except at church. She had regarded New York, the modern Babylon, from afar, with dread and awe and virtuous disapproval and shocked fascination. And now she was in the heart of the new Sodom, viewing the giddy and licentious whirl; getting her first sight of the sort of place she had been taught to think of along with the orgies of Nero and Belshazzar; and better dressed and better looking than any other woman in sight. And she was doing it all—seeing bedroom farces and wearing décolleté gowns, and visiting this resort of iniquity—with the purest of motives—to broaden her education and fit herself for a wider usefulness.

To me, the Zanzibar was rather a bore; but Agnes was positively gleeful. This was the sort of thing she had read about! New York was really as wicked as she had hoped. The swaying mass of dancers who bumped into each other on the crowded little floor delighted her, too. Some of them were really outrageous, though it was no worse than I'd seen at Wyndham, when we used to turn the lights out for a farewell waltz. All in all, she was deeply disappointed when one o'clock came and the Zanzibar closed with the virtuous promptitude that its reputation made necessary.

I WAS disappointed, too, but for a different reason. I was scared. The Deupree conscience was beginning to take up its bed and walk. This beautiful woman was my own creation; I'd breathed into her the breath of life that had wrought the transformation from the person without form and void whom I'd met at Asbury Park. And creation implied a responsibility.

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Agnes was a beautiful woman now, but a beautiful woman with a soul and three million dollars. I couldn't overlook either item.

Of course she'd feel an undying gratitude to the man who had made her beautiful; and gratitude interacting with the deference and admiration that I had displayed, and displayed honestly— Creations usually fell in love with their creators, didn't they? I had a hazy recollection of similar incidents in fiction and mythology, and that was the way it always turned out. Galatea fell in love with Pygmalion; the waifs and gipsies who were educated and given a station in life by benevolent gentlemen of middle age requited their benefactors with a tender affection that solaced the declining years; the clubman cast away on a desert island educated and eventually married the wild girl of irreproachable family connections, who had lived there since the great wreck when she was a mere child. It was inevitable. To be sure, the monster didn't fall in love with Frankenstein; but this exception was not discouraging.

WHY in the world had I of all men been so mad as to awaken a soul that would have slumbered peacefully till the resurrection morn? It had been a piece of June folly, stimulated by the mad desire to kiss Mrs. Clevenger. Well, she was kissable enough now; somebody ought to kiss her before long, for her own good if for no other reason. And she was no fool; she was probably expecting it. Perhaps to-night!

Well, I had thought of kissing her to-night. But that was in a moment of Gaylord folly. I couldn't go through with it. I couldn't marry three million dollars. To begin with, I didn't want to marry anybody. I was horribly afraid of marriage, when I dragged the idea out into the open. And if I married any one, it certainly wouldn't be a woman with millions.

And if I didn't ask her to marry me, I couldn't kiss her. Agnes didn't know the difference between pastime and deadly earnest; it wouldn't be fair.

But could I help it? We had had a glittering and worldly party, and she would expect a stormily emotional finish. She would be angry; she would weep. She would say: "Oh, Doctor Deupree, how could you?" But she'd expect it.

And if I didn't—? Well, she'd wonder how I couldn't. My influence would be weakened. What would become of Wyndham College? It was unreasonable to expect this radiant beauty who was beginning to—as old Goodhue had put it, to branch out—it was unreasonable to suppose that she would stay unkissed very long. If I didn't do it, somebody else would. Perhaps Gushmore!

In this state of mind I brought her out to the street, and here chance offered a momentary reprieve. In the line of taxis drawn up at the curb—closed taxis, ominously inviting—there was one ancient victoria, drawn by a still more ancient horse and driven by a positively patriarchal cabman, and open, top and sides, to the view of all about. I handed her in.

"A relic of old New York," I said nervously. "I thought this would be more picturesque than a taxi, rather—rather——"

"Rather Bohemian," she said, with a self-conscious little laugh. "Yes. It was like you to think of it. What a delightful night!"

It seemed to me unendurably sultry; heavy clouds swept the heat back to the pavements; I felt almost apoplectic. Agnes looked about her curiously.

"I don't think any of your friends will see us," I assured her.

"Oh, no. None of them would be up so late. I was just thinking— I wonder if we could drive about a little, in the cool night air. I—it seems a shame to go home so soon."

"You liked the Zanzibar?" I asked.

"Wasn't it revolting?" she said happily. "I had never dreamed that such bacchanalian revelry would be tolerated in a Christian country. How great a field there is for persons such as ourselves, Doctor Deupree! That young couple that did the special dances—weren't they dreadful?"

"They have to make a living," I said, "and they may not know any other way."

"I had never thought of that. And that puts a different aspect on it, doesn't it? It isn't as bad as if they were getting pleasure out of it. One gets a new point of view in New York. Really, it has been a wonderful evening. I hope I'm not keeping you up too late. Do you live near here?"

"Miles and miles from here," I said, "in a little apartment near the university."

"That must be a delightful life," said Agnes with a sigh. "Free from the cares of a large household, yet comfortable and cozy. I think I should like to live in an apartment."

"Mine is more comfortable to visit than to live in," I put in hastily. "My friends like it when they come for tea, but if they had to live there——"

"Oh, do you give teas in your apartment? How charming! I—I've read about that sort of thing, but I've never attended one."

"Then I'll give a tea next week," I promised, "and you'll be the guest of honor. As soon as the conference is over—or sooner, for that matter. Can't we cut the conference some afternoon?"

"I think we might," she admitted with the rudiments of coquetry. "You speak on Monday night, do you not? Suppose we say Tuesday."

"Tuesday at five," I said. "I know you'll like it."

"I know it, too," said Agnes. "That is—there would be some one else there, I suppose, some other women."

I disappointed her by saying that I'd see to that. I was determined that for once Edith would have to do a little work for the family. I might fall in love with Agnes; I might kiss her; but I was not going to hunt trouble by having her alone at tea.

AND the cab turned into Forty-sixth Street. Agnes turned over a plump wrist and looked at a jeweled watch which must have used up the best part of a thousand dollars.

"Twenty minutes after one," she said. "Later than I have ever stayed out before. But don't you think we might drive up the Avenue a little way—it's so comfortably empty." At my gloomy order the driver turned away from the Ritz.

"I suppose you think that I'm very gay," said Agnes with a nervous little laugh, "and I know it is terribly late. With any other man I should have felt it impossible to visit the places where we

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went to-night. I should have been putting myself in a false position. But you are different."

Agnes paused and looked away; she was waiting, and I was missing the cue. They were old familiar lines, but they had never taken this turn before. I studied her profile; she looked like a woman who expected to be made very angry by being kissed. And there was not another soul in sight.

"Mrs. Clevenger," I began hoarsely.

"What is it—Alec?"

"I—I—wasn't that a drop of rain?"

"I didn't feel any," said Agnes irritably. "What were you about to say?"

Yes, what was I about to say? I didn't know myself, and in a moment more I'd have to say it. But just then Providence obligingly rewarded me for some of the accumulated merits of the Deuprees. A raindrop—an undeniable raindrop, as big as a silver dollar—splashed on her upturned face, and it was followed by half a dozen others.

"Mercy!" she gasped. "My clothes! Take me back to the hotel—quick!"

It couldn't have been too quickly for me; and, as it happened, we escaped without injury; there were a few more drops, but the torrential downpour that had been gathering behind the clouds waited until our vehicle rolled up at the hotel door. The lady to whom I said good night in the lobby had forgotten that she had been disappointed. She was only thankful to have got in before it rained.

But there would be other nights! I could read expectation in her eyes and her lingering hand-clasp at parting, and I couldn't expect it to rain every night at Maplecrest.

CHAPTER SEVEN
The Nut-Gathering

AGNES was lunching with some women on Friday, and coming up to the conference with them afterward. That suited me well enough, for I thought that Agnes and I might profitably stay away from each other for a little while. The situation had become delicate; there was no knowing where it would lead us, but anywhere seemed as bad as anywhere else. My sentimental journey was just beginning; some time in the next few days I should have to kiss her, or definitely, once for all, eternally and immutably, not kiss her; and there were large objections to either course.

Separation, even for a few hours—for I'd have to keep my eye on her at Maplecrest to-night—might be good for us both. This thing would have to work itself out. And when I had reached this point, I took my head in my hands and wondered miserably whither I was drifting. Was I thinking of marrying this woman? Well, why not? As Goodhue had said, it would be eminently suitable, and I knew it wouldn't hurt my standing at the university to marry a few millions. But that was it—the millions! I couldn't marry Agnes for her money, and I had to have a better reason than a momentary desire to kiss her.

For the truth is that when I thought over that evening with Agnes I found that certain stretches of it had been somewhat wearing. She hadn't lost any of her convictions as to her own importance. Now that her weak point had been strengthened, she saw no reason why she should not be regarded as the undisputed queen of the universe. To be sure, I had used the strong hand once, and with good effect; but could I use it again? Agnes loved her opinions more than she had loved her looks. Life with her might conceivably be depressing to a man more sensitive than the late Zaccheus.

And after all, I reflected, as I strode up and down my living-room—three strides from wall to wall—the point of the whole thing was that she didn't excite me. Making her beautiful had excited me; showing her New York had been exciting; wondering whether I could get away without kissing her had been too exciting for comfort. But Agnes in herself, pure and simple—Agnes across the dinner-table, Agnes in the conversational parlor, Agnes as she might look before the living-room fireplace on a long winter evening—Agnes as such, left me cold.

I picked up the little picture of Lucile and stared at it with the most genuine regret I'd felt in years. I'd never wondered whether or not I wanted to kiss Lucile; and I'd never left her unkissed when she wanted to be kissed as badly as Agnes had wanted to be last night. It was a piece of boy-and-girl foolishness, of course; but it undeniably had had a thrill about it that I'd never got out of Agnes, nor any of the girls who looked on me as their best friend, the only man to whom they could tell the things they really thought about their husbands.

Yes, for a day or so I would leave her as much alone as the interests of Wyndham College would permit; things could take their course. So I telephoned to Edith, and luckily caught her just before she left for Southampton.

"You've got to come up here to tea on Tuesday," I said, and my necessity gave me an unaccustomed tone of command. "I want you to meet Mrs. Clevenger."

"Who? Oh, yes. Why, Alec, I'll probably be busy. I have so many things, you know, before we start for China——"

"I know it," I interrupted, "but you'll have to come that day. The blood of all the dead Deuprees will cry out from the ground if you don't. I need you."

"But I——"

"No nonsense," I said sharply. "You'll have to come."

"Oh, very well," said Edith, with unexpected meekness.

And I hung up the receiver with a great deal of satisfaction. It was the first time I had ever talked to Edith like that, and it was the first time I had ever got anything out of her but good advice. The strong hand seemed to be effective with women. Perhaps I could use it once more on Agnes. At any rate, it seemed that I, Alec Deupree, the friend, brother, and messenger-boy of all the girls, could bend them to my will when I really tried. Hereafter, I decided, I'd try a little oftener. I would be firm.

THERE was not much firmness left in me when I arrived at Maplecrest; nor did I have room for any other emotion than envy of the idle rich who could make this stuffy trip by motor instead of by train. My tastes were never very expensive; my salary had always met my needs, till I started bribing head waiters to impress Agnes But this afternoon, when I thought of the

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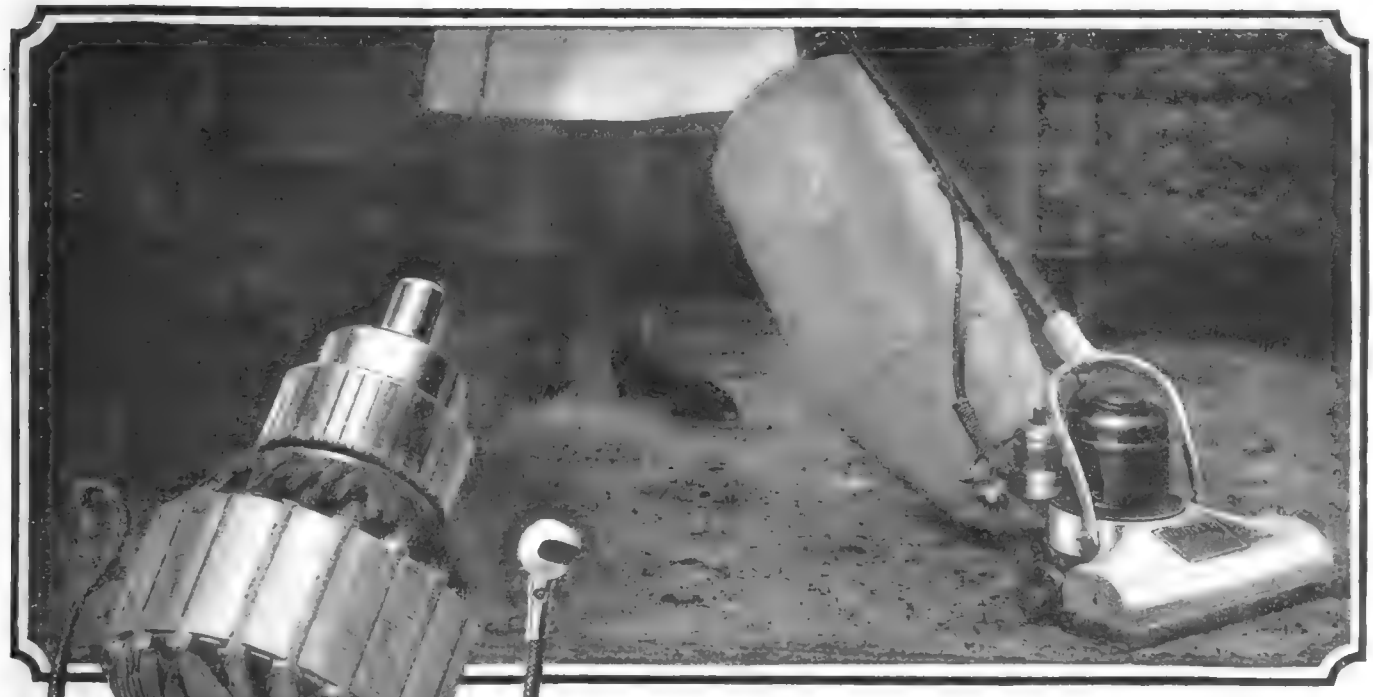

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difference between riding up to Maplecrest in a soft-cushioned, easily gliding car, open to the breeze and the scenery—and this agony of dust and wicker seats and squalling infants—well, there was much to be said for three million dollars.

But the trip was short, and when I'd reached the hotel, and bathed and shaved and put on my newest flannels, I strolled down-stairs to look over the conference with renewed interest in life. Before I left this hotel my career might turn its decisive corner.

AT FIRST sight, I didn't think much of the conference. To begin with, it was mostly at tea. On an afternoon like this, the links, the tennis-courts, the basement pool, even the walks through the grounds, would have tempted ordinary people; but these were not ordinary. The men fell into two classes—diluted old ones with long coats and white-lawn ties, and acid young ones with short coats and ties of brilliant red. As for the women, they couldn't be classified at all, but there was no doubt that the remodeled Agnes would stand out among them like the morning star in a sky full of tallow candles.

The only Gushmore held court at the entrance to the tea-room, bowing right and left, chatting merrily with the ladies, and greeting the gentlemen with polite and serious superiority, as one who felt his own perfection keenly, but would do what he could to raise the rest of the world toward his level. If there had been no Agnes to worry about, I should have pretended to mistake him for the head waiter, and have given him five dollars; but it wouldn't do. Besides, I needed the five dollars, and he might have kept it.

So I introduced myself, submitted to some conversational pats on the head, and was just about to ask him some leading questions about his conference, when a new flock of women appeared, and he turned aside to greet them. I cast another look over the delegates and asked a bell-boy to show me to the bar.

And there I found Jerome Hershfield of the *Morning News*—one of our old crowd of Morningside merrymakers. Jerome was usually plunged in gloom, but to-day he was positively abysmal.

"You, too," he groaned. "What are you here for?"

"To make a speech."

"Good God! You don't mean to say you get money for talking at this nut convention."

"No, I don't get money; but I hope to get a pleasant holiday. And it's hot in town."

"I don't want to disturb your dream of a pleasant holiday, but I'll bet you five dollars you don't stay the week out."

"Are they as bad as that?" I asked apprehensively. "I noticed that some of them looked rather untutored, but——"

"The people who are running it are not untutored," said Hershfield. "They're several other things, but they're not that. Deupree, I've been here since yesterday afternoon. I've looked 'em all over. I've talked to some of 'em. I knew most of them before, personally or by reputation. And they've got just one redeeming feature—not many rumhounds in the crowd. They're mostly tea spaniels. So down here in this sheltered grotto you can get the peace and quiet that you're going to need—Lord, how you're going to need it!"

"I notice in the list of those present," I said, turning over the leaves of my program, "that they divide us into delegates, honorary delegates, and other persons. I'm only a person. I can remain quiet under the affront, in view of the fact that the room-clerk assures me that my board and lodging are paid till the end of the conference; but I wonder why."

"Oh, you 'persons' are the class of the conference," Hershfield explained. "You've come up here for free advertising or a free vacation—merely this and nothing more. But you're only the scenery of this drama. Besides the delegates and the honorary delegates, there's the committee in charge; you've overlooked that. The speakers are the scenery, the delegates are the chorus, and the action of the play consists in the efforts of the committee to shake down the honorary delegates. The unhappy victims are——"

"Persons of great wealth and benevolent inclinations," I said.

"You have it," said Hershfield. "The wealth being more essential than the inclinations. This is an extraordinarily alert lot of people, Deupree. The main point is to get some generous person to finance a permanent organization for the promotion of assorted uplift, with big salaries and no auditing. But anybody here will accept any donation of money for any purpose. There is little false pride."

"Gushmore, I suppose, looks after the best prospects——"

"Your supposition is correct," said Hershfield. "I believe the professional ethics of the situation is this—he got up the conference, he invited the suckers, and by way of commission he gets first pick of the easy marks. The others take what's left. I've known Gushmore five years. He can persuade any woman over fifteen and under seventy that his real name's Galahad, and that he needs nothing but a little more money to cure all the evils that afflict suffering humanity. He came back from the peace conference with a large stock of assorted ideals, slightly damaged in shipment, and you might look on this conference as a sacrifice sale. That is to say, the goods are marked at greatly reduced prices. He knows what he wants; but if he can't put over his pet idea of the permanent organization, he'll let his stock go below cost, if necessary, in order to make a quick turnover. Now are you going to stay, or do you want to check out and take the next train back to town?"

"I have to stay," I said. "I'm acting as body-guard for one of his prospects." And I told him something of my responsibility for Agnes; the personal side of it, I thought, could well remain locked within my bosom.

"How old is the lady?" he asked.

"Thirty-two."

"Pretty?"

"Beautiful."

"Then Gushmore will marry her," he prophesied, "if you give him half a chance."

I MEDITATED. Gushmore, according to Goodhue, had made an impression on Agnes. I too had made an impression, deeper and more recent; but after what I'd heard I'd be afraid to give Gushmore five minutes alone with her. The man was dangerous. I'd have to spend every moment at her side to be sure of her. And if

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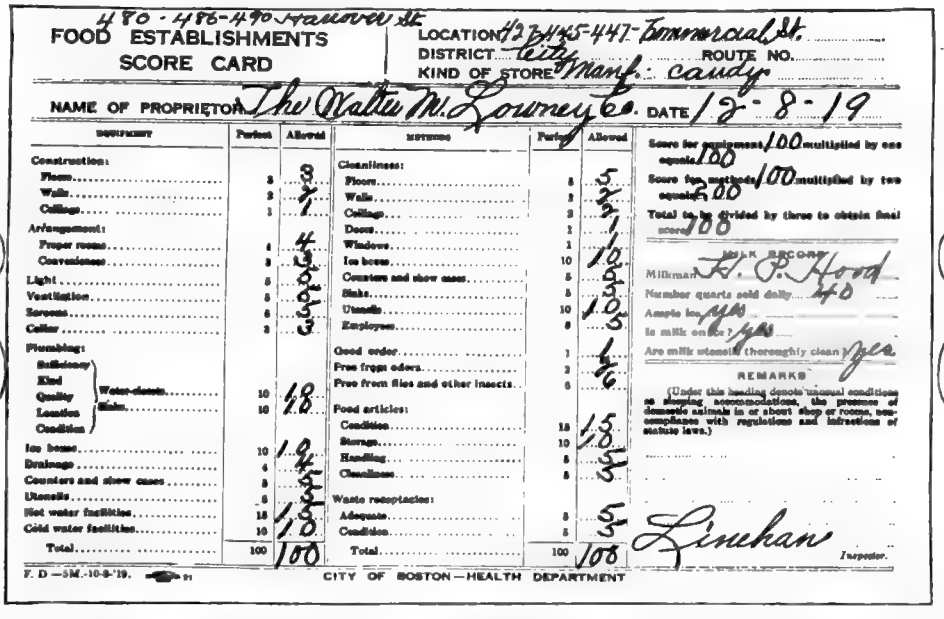
This is the "fussy" inspector

OVER in Boston, Mass., they have a very exacting Health Department. The inspector comes around with mighty critical looks. He pokes into every corner of every factory.

In due course he came to give Lowney's its annual inspection. He walked down the aisles watching delicious Chocolates in the making. We followed him with a confident smile. Later he turned in his report.

Here it is. We think you will be glad to know that the place where Crest Chocolates and Lowney's Chocolates are made has the 100% O. K. of the rightly "fussy" Boston Health Department.



480-486-490 Hanover St.

FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS
SCORE CARD

LOCATION 473-475-447 Commercial St.
DISTRICT City ROUTE NO.
KIND OF STORE Manf.: candy

NAME OF PROPRIETOR The Walter M. Lowney Co. DATE 12-8-19

EQUIPMENT	Perfect	Allowed
Construction:		
Floors	8	8
Walls	2	1
Ceilings	1	1
Arrangement:		
Proper rooms	4	4
Conveniences	5	4½
Light	5	5
Ventilation	5	5
Screens	5	5
Cellar	3	3
Plumbing:		
Sufficiency		
Kind		
Quality		
Location	Water-closets	10
Condition	Sinks	10
Ice boxes	10	10
Drainage	4	4
Counters and show cases	5	5
Utensils	5	5
Hot water facilities	15	15
Cold water facilities	10	10
Total	100	100

REFERENCE	Perfect	Allowed
Cleanliness:		
Floors	5	5
Walls	3	3
Ceilings	3	3
Doors	1	1
Windows	1	1
Ice boxes	10	10
Counters and show cases	5	5
Sinks	5	5
Utensils	10	10
Employees	6	6
Good order	1	1
Free from odors	2	2
Free from flies and other insects	6	6
Food articles:		
Condition	15	15
Storage	10	10
Handling	5	5
Cleanliness	5	5
Waste receptacles:		
Adequate	5	5
Condition	5	5
Total	100	100

Score for equipment 100 multiplied by one equals 100
Score for methods 100 multiplied by two equals 200
Total to be divided by three to obtain final score 100

MILK RECORD
Milkman H. P. Hood
Number quarts sold daily 40
Ample ice yes
Is milk cooled? yes
Are milk utensils thoroughly cleaned? yes

REMARKS
(Under this heading denote unusual conditions as sleeping accommodations, the presence of domestic animals in or about shop or rooms, non-compliance with regulations and infractions of statute laws.)

Linehan
Inspector.

F. D.—5M.-10-8-'19.
CITY OF BOSTON—HEALTH DEPARTMENT

LOWNEY PRODUCTS

Chocolates — Cocoa — Bars — Chocolate

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I spent every moment at her side, this matter that ought to be left to work itself out would rush to a decision within three days. I'd either be definitely engaged to Agnes, or definitely out of the race, in no position to stop Gushmore.

"I wish you'd help me," I said. "Take turns amusing her, or——"

"Not me," said Hershfield decisively. "I've got troubles of my own. Gushmore is sore at me on account of the story I sent about his past and his prospects, last night. Three or four honest uplifters—for there are honest people in this game—read my story and left this morning; they hadn't realized what they were getting into. So I've got a row on my hands. I'll be too busy to help you, but I've got a colleague that might. A man doing a feature story for our Sunday magazine. He'll do about two hours' work in the whole week. He's not a newspaper man; he's an author, from Greenwich Village. Name's Wyman—Alan Wyman. Ever hear of him?"

"I used to play bridge with him two nights a week," I said, "but I haven't seen him in two years. Where is he?"

"He curled up and went to sleep after lunch," said Hershfield. "But it would be no more than a friendly act to keep him from sleeping through dinner."

ALAN didn't think it was a friendly act at first, but when Hershfield had rolled up the shade, and Alan had turned over two or three times and rubbed his eyes, he finally recognized me and seized my hand.

"Well, Alec Deupree! Whatever brings you to this temple of mania?"

"Don't kid him," said Hershfield. "He's one of the speakers. On Monday he's going to tell us about—wait a minute—about 'Colleges and the Mentally Unfit, or, Why We Accept Tuition Fees from Boneheads.' Oh, he's got an alibi. I don't think much of it, but since you're a writer and not a newspaper man, maybe he can put it over on you. I'm going down-stairs to get the dope on the opening session. See you both at dinner."

"Well!" said Alan. "Tell me all about everything. Still at Columbia? Written anything?"

I told him about my book.

"You professors are deplorably lacking in class consciousness," he said. "The only way one of you can get ahead is by pushing another one back down, proving he never knew anything and never will. Why don't you hang together like the doctors, and pretend none of you ever makes a mistake? But I suppose you know best. What else? Married? Engaged?"

"Not yet," I said, wondering how long I'd be able to say it. "And you?"

"Oh, I've had a devil of a time," he growled. "There was a girl out West—I never knew anybody like her— It was infernally bad luck—the most promising job I ever had—the most wonderful girl I ever knew—where are they now? Where are they now?"

"Well? Where are they? Or rather, what were they?"

"They were in Chicago—irony of Fate—Chicago. It all began when some Middle-Western plutocrats decided to put the Atlantic seaboard in its place by getting out a brilliant, flippant review, that would combine the fashion, wit, music, literature and art of the Mississippi Valley. Something urban and cosmopolitan they wanted, so of course they had to hire a New Yorker to run it. And I got the job."

"You were born in Virginia," I reminded him.

"What of that? Even New Yorkers have to be born somewhere. Well, I came into this thing after they'd got out three or four numbers at a terrific loss. It was a big chance; but the trouble was that each of the men who were backing it had his own ideas about how to run it. I wrangled with them while we got out one more number that combined all their ideas. That issue died in its ranks; it never left the news-stands; and I was just getting ready to get out from under when the angels of the enterprise beat me to it.

"Well, that left me free to work out my own ideas if I could get anybody to pay the printer. There was one man in the crowd who looked as if he might be good for one more contribution. I knew him tolerably well by this time—him and his wife—so we persuaded him—his wife and I—to lend me ten thousand on my personal note, unsecured. Alec, I didn't dream I could ever pull ten thousand out of anybody. I was on the heights."

"Well?"

"And then," said Alan despondently, "I fell in love with his wife."

"And had to pay him back."

"Oh, no; the money was all spent. Damn it, why couldn't I have met her before she married? She was a golden, capricious creature, a million times too good for him. I could have made her happy. I could— I suppose I shouldn't tell you all this, but I've got to tell somebody. I've kept it bottled up too long. It hurts. Ever fall in love with a married woman? But of course you wouldn't; you're not that way. Well, I tried not to tell her, but I couldn't help it; and then I found that she cared, too."

BY THIS time he had worked himself up into a Greenwich-Village rage, and stamped up and down the room, pulling his hair. It wasn't long enough to be conveniently pullable, but that was his way.

"Well—I couldn't stay there, making love to her in her husband's house; she'd have been mad enough to run away with me before long. But he could give her everything and I could give her nothing—nothing but myself. A poor gift, that. A poor gift." He dropped into a graceful Byronic pose beside the window, and held it long enough for me to realize what an extraordinarily munificent gift he thought he was. All the same, he was really moved, more deeply than I had ever seen him.

"So for her sake I went away. We passed out of each other's lives. It's hellish hard. Sometimes I wonder if it wouldn't have been better to do the heroic thing—to face it, take the consequences, and build our lives over again. But it's always the woman who pays; and she'd had an easy, sheltered life; they'd never trained her to be heroic. I could have stood anything; but for her— She was too fine to do anything—smudgy; anything that would get into the papers. And yet——"

"And the magazine?" I asked.

"Oh, yes—the magazine. Well, by the time I'd used up his ten thousand, I saw that my ideas wouldn't pay any more than the others, so I closed up the office and came back to New York. And there you are."

"You're a fool," I said. "If I cared for a girl like that——"

"You'd think of her first," said Alan. "You wouldn't—soil her."

He was right, of course. It had been the Kentucky blood that inspired me with the idea that he and his golden, capricious creature might have taken their fate into their hands. No Deupree would ever have done it. Besides, we had a different kind of fate.

"I suppose you hate the sight of other women now?" I suggested.

"I can't endure them. They're dust and ashes."

"There's a girl here I'd like to have you meet," I told him. And then, rather ashamed of such a bourgeois chronicle after his own narrative of love and parting, I explained my difficulties about Agnes and the college.

"I can't be with her all the time," I finished. "But she's really an excellent person, and I don't want any of these high-binders to carry her off. If your father had ever sat up nights nursing a small college, you'd understand. I need help; but I suppose you couldn't——"

"I'm trying to dull the pain," he said, somewhat more cheerfully. "After all, one must go on living. And after the—well, the tragedy I've been living through, I think a little comedy will be a relief. Is she here now?"

"She ought to be," I said. "We'll find out."

But the desk had heard nothing from Mrs. Clevenger, for whom Rooms 223-4-5 were being reserved. I got into a telephone-booth and called the Ritz.

"Hello!" came a feeble voice some fifteen minutes later. "Yes, this is Mrs. Clevenger. . . . What? . . . Oh! Doctor Deupree! . . . Oh, you're there already."

"Why aren't you here?" I asked. "Waiting for your friends?"

"They went up this afternoon," she explained, "but I had a—a rather awful headache. I think it was the smoke and the—the atmosphere in the restaurant. So I stayed here."

The thirty miles of wire between us gave me confidence, and the looks of the conference gave me a rash inspiration.

"I miss you very much," I said. "And if you're ill, I'm coming down to look after you. I can't let you stay in New York all alone."

"Oh, please don't put yourself out. I feel a great deal better. I'm sure I can come up to-morrow."

"If you're not here by noon," I asserted, "I'm going to come down and see you. No, you needn't try to stop me. I'll come."

"It is like you to be so thoughtful, but I feel sure that I shall be well to-morrow."

And she must have been having a rather lonesome time of it, for despite frequent mention of racking pain she talked six dollars and ninety cents' worth.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Complications

OUR conference on the Segregation of the Socially Inefficient opened with a hurrah that night. There was a general sentiment of forward-looking exhilaration, and I gathered by conversation with

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various delegates that there was every reason to expect that the difficulties which had so far hindered human progress would be removed by the end of next week.

I didn't know what Agnes would think of all this, but I was afraid that even after all I'd done for her she might find the atmosphere congenial. I didn't. The only congenial persons I had found were Hershfield and Wyman; and Hershfield was busy on Saturday morning, while Wyman was still asleep. I began to build considerable hopes on the continuation of Agnes's headache. The desk had nothing from her, and when she failed to appear on the noon train, I decided to go down to New York on the 12:51. I didn't have to appear at the conference till Monday, and perhaps I could persuade Agnes to spend the week-end in town.

To be sure, I didn't know what I was going to say to her, nor what she was going to say to me. But we had both had time to relax; perhaps we could take up our relations a little further back. And even the possibility of being forced to action was more attractive than killing another day here unaided.

By way of precaution, I woke Wyman up before I left and put him on the most solemn oath to look after Agnes, in case she should pass me on the way; to give her a good time till I could get back to Maplecrest, and above all, to keep her away from Gushmore. He seemed to be entering more or less into the spirit of the thing, particularly when I described her looks; and when his enthusiam rose I asked him to come in town Tuesday to my tea. He could keep Edith busy while I talked to Agnes; or, if matters had reached a dangerous tension, he could amuse Agnes while I listened to Edith. I was beginning to think that I was a good deal of a strategist.

AND after all, I did miss her. At the Ritz they told me she'd left with some women shortly after one o'clock. The next train to Maplecrest was at 5:11, so I concluded she was probably lunching somewhere. I'd meet her at the train. Meanwhile, I had four hours of a rather unusually good June afternoon to spend somehow. McCabe would have come back from Philadelphia by this time, and I could have filled up the interval by discussing my book with him; but I didn't. And presently I found myself in a telephone booth, calling Miss Deming at the Plaza.

Hazel was at home, I discovered, and would be glad to see me. How glad I didn't realize till I was admitted to her huge tapestried living-room and found her playing solitaire.

"What's the matter with your conference?" she demanded. "Did it break up in a fight? Sarah and I had made up our minds to come up on Monday and hear you talk."

"You'd find it incredibly dull," I warned her. "I—I'm sure you wouldn't like it at all. I—I hate it."

"I'd like something dull for a change," said Hazel. "I could use it. I seem to pick up all the excitement in your city. Look what they've done to me." She handed me an evening paper and then, with rather surprising annoyance, tore it out of my hand.

"Don't read it—it's too ridiculous. They've got a head-line now—'Hazel Day by Day.'"

"What have you done now?"

"Nothing," she sniffed. "It just happened that yesterday I went to call on a woman I'd known out on the coast. She was out of town, but I didn't have sense enough to phone first; so I toddled right up to her apartment, found the front door jimmied open, and walked right in on a burglar. Yes, you're going to say I ought to have called a policeman; but there wasn't time. I went for him and he went for the window—lost his footing on the fire-escape, fell into the court, and lay there all smashed up till the janitor took charge of him and found his pockets full of jewels. I didn't do anything, and this foolish paper— But I must say, I don't think much of your burglars. Let a girl scare him out! This is a queer town!"

"There is more to our town than ever you have seen," I assured her. "And I'm going to show it to you as soon as this conference is over. And you'll find the town more amusing than the conference."

"You can't scare me away from the conference," said Hazel. "I want to hear you speak. Besides, it's the first thing that Sarah and I have agreed on for quite a while, so we've got to put it through. How are you getting on with the old lady?"

I LOOKED at her with professorial severity.

"What did you mean," I demanded, "by telling me to take her to 'Grapefruit, Coffee and Rolls'? Do you know that you might have lost my college a women's dormitory, and a memorial gateway, and a quarter of a million dollars on the endowment fund?"

"What was the matter with the show? It ended with the hero hugging his own wife, and telling her he was going to make her so happy she'd never look at anybody else. What could be more moral than that?"

"You young imp!" I exploded. "You know what was the matter with it. Before it reached that highly moral conclusion——"

"I saw nothing objectionable," said Hazel serenely. "To the pure all things are pure. Didn't the lady like it?"

"Well," I admitted, "she seemed to reconcile herself to the exhibition of depravity."

"Good for her!" said Hazel. "She's a real sport. Sarah hasn't got over that show yet."

"I hope Sarah is sick," I ventured. "That is, I mean, that she isn't sick."

"Oh, no. She isn't sick. I didn't tell her you were coming, and she lives six rooms away; but she'll be in before long."

"Then let's go out and take a walk," I suggested, "before she comes to life."

"Is it nice outside this afternoon? I thought about going out, and then I was afraid it would be too hot. Do you know, I haven't been swimming this year, and I'm simply wild about it. But I thought I'd wait till I got a real car, and then I could pack up a lot of clothes and run down anywhere for a week-end whenever I felt like it."

"Let's walk over to Broadway and look at Sagamores," I suggested. "Then we could go to tea somewhere afterward, and dance."

"I'm so glad you're not old and white-haired!" she cried. "Wait till I tell Sarah, and get my hat."

I didn't like this idea of laying everything before Sarah—Sarah, who didn't like me. And presently Hazel came back with such a quaintly doleful face that I knew something had gone wrong.

"Sarah's going with us," she announced. "She'd like to get out in the open air, and she wants to see what kind of car I'm going to buy. That's what she says. And all the time I can hear her registering a vow that that child must never be allowed to stir out of her sight, particularly with a man who looks bold and bad."

I shook my head.

"You can't flatter me. Nobody recommended by my cousin Edith could possibly be very dangerous."

"Well, you see," said Hazel, "Sarah thinks about as little of Mrs. Torrey as Mrs. Torrey thinks of her. Each of them regards the other as somebody that is sure to ruin my future; and so they pull and push, back and forth, and little Hazel and her present are all stepped on in the shuffle. It is a hard life for us defenseless girls."

WE WALKED across to Broadway with the dragon interposed between me and Hazel, and doing most of the talking; but they both forgot about me when we reached the Sagamore Building. Externally it was not unlike a butcher's ice-box—a large, resplendent, formidably hygienic structure of white tile and great expanses of plate glass. As for the interior, it was Bonner's pride that drunken pedestrians had been known to walk into his showroom under the impression that it was a café. The high walls were of shining white marble, broken here and there with little niches ornamented by evergreens in white marble pots; a marble stairway, covered with a deep blue carpet, led up to Bonner's office on the floor above; tubbed palms forested the floor, and in the midst of it all was a fountain, its jet of water falling over the back of a white marble nymph into a white marble bowl. The farther end of the room was shut off by a huge curtain of deep blue velvet, and there was not an automobile in sight. If there had been, the visitor would have felt that its chauffeur had carelessly driven past the hotel garage and into the palm garden restaurant.

Bonner was in, and my card presently brought him down in his own fat person. He greeted us with the gracious affability of one who hopes to collect nine thousand dollars before the afternoon is over, and at a word from him two acolytes receded into the distance and stationed themselves beside the blue curtain. Another word, and the curtains were drawn aside; and there on a platform of speckless marble stood the Sagamore Midyear Model Touring Car, resplendent in chaste magnificence.

Hazel heaved a big sigh of joy and promptly forgot that I existed. For half an hour she and Bonner held a technical conversation on tire mileage and gasoline consumption and revolutions per minute, drive and ignition and wheelbase, and a dozen other matters that were dark to me, while I sat on one of the marble benches, and tried unsuccessfully to persuade Mrs. Whitlow that New York was not much hotter than Death Valley.

When Bonner finally brought Hazel back to us, it appeared that he had all but made a sale.

"I love it," she said. "There's only one thing more—I want to get in the country somewhere and be sure it can do seventy-five. Mr. Bonner, when can you——"

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"I'm busy this afternoon," he said glumly. "One of the boys might run you out, but—well—if you'd wait a day or two, Miss Deming—I'd take you out myself. There's—er—one or two things that they might not just know about it, see."

"All right," said Hazel. "I see. We'll wait. But I've got to see seventy-five, remember——"

"Young man," said Mrs. Whitlow with steadfast determination, "do you propose to make that there automobile go seventy-five miles an hour? Because if you do, you'll be the only one in it. I ain't a-goin' to let this child risk her life——"

"Oh yes, you are," said Hazel calmly. "You can come along if you want to; and if you don't Mr. Bonner and I can keep from breaking off any lampposts, I guess. My fingers are simply itching for that wheel."

"If you buy one of these things," I asked, "are you going to drive it yourself?"

"Why, of course. Why not?"

Well, there was no reason why not, except that Edith had prepared me to find Hazel still in the pony-cart age. And to hear her talk calmly of flinging this monstrous bulk of metal over the landscape at seventy-five miles an hour—

"It looks a little—large," I said lamely. "Of course you can handle it, but to take care of it——"

"Any garage can do that, and three-quarters of the fun is in driving it yourself. Don't you think that's the way with most things? I suppose I ought to be all cluttered up with a chauffeur and a maid, and somebody to answer the door in my apartment, and a lot of things that go with money; but I like to do things for myself. I can't see where there's any good in being—well, rich—if you have to complicate your life with a lot of houses and servants and things that only get in your way. Don't you think so?"

"I've never had occasion to think about it," I said. "But if I had a great deal of money I'd probably invent more refinements in the art of taking things easy than the world has seen since the fall of Rome."

Hazel smiled indulgently.

"Oh, no, you wouldn't. You don't even think so. You just like to hear yourself talk."

Which to a gentleman who was going to be a full professor next year, from a girl who had been a freshman last year, was a really amazing piece of impertinence.

HOWEVER, I eventually got her away from the seven-passenger palm garden and on the way to a café down the street. I had to ask Bonner, of course; and when he refused I knew he was really busy. But he led me aside as Hazel and Mrs. Whitlow passed out.

"Say, Doc, where do you get 'em all? This is a princess."

"Do you like her better than Mrs. Clevenger?"

"Like her—oh, be kind, Doc, be kind. This girl is the real article. The Fausting seems to be rather good this season."

Mrs. Whitlow's distrust of me heightened perceptibly when we entered a café decorated in dead black and angry orange, where a considerable number of indolent and dissolute persons were skipping about a dancing floor between gulps of tea and other things. This, she seemed to think, was one of those gilded spider-webs of the great city whose evil fame had spread even to the desert; it was lucky that she happened to be on hand when the spider walked in with Hazel. And Sarah would have scared the hardest spider that ever spun a web. As she sat there, grimly erect and sour and condemnatory, she looked like a ghost from the simpler age of the pioneers, come back to reproach the degenerate Americans of modern days. Three or four people actually got up and changed tables to be out of range of her eyes.

Hazel and I couldn't change our table; we had to sit still, during the tea-drinking intervals, and listen to the dragon woman's drumfire of embittered comment on the degeneracy of these times. The only escape was to dance; and Hazel danced better than any partner that I could remember since the ancient days of Lucile. Sarah's eyes followed us about like a searchlight picking out a periscope, but we liked it.

IN THE course of the sixth or seventh waltz Hazel observed that this was the life.

"I hadn't danced for two months," she said. "Thank you for waking me up. You're going to be in town till Monday, aren't you?"

"Why, no," I faltered. "I—I'm afraid I'll have to go back at 5:11. Too bad, but——"

Hazel turned over the arm that rested on my shoulder and looked at her wrist watch.

"You can't go at 5:11. It's 5:15 now."

"There's another train at eight something," I recalled, but I suppose my tone was rather glum. For she burst out laughing.

"You poor thing, do you really hate it as badly as all that? Why don't you stay in town till Monday and let me drive you up in the runabout?"

Oh, the temptation of that woman! I hated the conference; I hated everybody there but Hershfield, who was busy, and Wyman, who was generally asleep, and Agnes. If I stayed in town I'd miss that miserable railroad trip; I'd have Sunday to do whatever amused me; and Monday morning to play around with Hazel before we started up to Westchester.

Of course, there was Agnes. But I'd be there by noon on Monday. For thirty-six hours Wyman could certainly keep her clear of entangling alliances. I wanted to see her, of course; but after all, the best thing you could do with Agnes was to look at her. Agnes as the alternative to the conference had brought me down to New York. But Agnes and the conference as the alternative to New York in June! I saw no reason to doubt that I had been right yesterday when I thought that a little well-timed separation would be good for Agnes and myself.

The Deupree conscience whispered to me that there was a certain amount of casuistry in this reasoning, but I threw the Deupree conscience down the cellar stairs and locked the door.

"I might skip Sunday," I said.

"Of course you might skip Sunday," Hazel agreed. "Then we could drive around over Westchester for an hour or two in the cool of Monday morning, and go to the conference when it begins to get hot. Sarah could ride on the back seat and you could talk to me."

There was no doubt about it; she was a good deal more entertaining than Agnes.

"Then I'll call for you at the Plaza Monday morning," I suggested. "Say at eleven o'clock."

"Oh, but we'd miss all the freshness of the morning with such a late start," she exclaimed. "You live near the university, don't you? That's right on the way. I'll drive past and pick you up and save time. Give me your address, and I'll honk the horn for you at eight."

I had thought I was long past the time of life when I'd get up at eight o'clock for any woman. But there was a ruthless determination about this girl.

"Well enough," I capitulated. "And to-morrow I'll put in a hard day's work on my book."

She stared at me a moment, and then laughed.

"You have to buy off your conscience, don't you? I'd been thinking we might slip away from Sarah and drive down to Long Beach for a swim. But perhaps we'd better not. The way she feels about you, she'd think you'd kidnaped me; and she'd call up the police and have us arrested. Then I'd have to fire her, and that wouldn't do. She's really a dear old creature, and she does me a lot of good. Besides, I don't want to get into the papers again; it was fun for a while, but they make me tired. I could enjoy total privacy for about a week."

A MOMENT later, as we were applauding the orchestra which knew it would have to give an encore, but felt that it would be unprofessional to do so until the dancers had made a certain amount of commotion about it, she dropped a bomb on me from the skies.

"By the way, I'm coming to your tea on Tuesday."

"You are?" I cried in panic.

"Well! Not if you feel that way about it."

"But my dear girl, I don't feel that way about it," I assured her. "Only——"

"Only you wonder who invited me," she suggested. "Mrs. Torrey. She called me up from Southampton this morning and said she'd promised you to be there; that you needed another woman to fill out, or something like that, and she was going to be too busy; so would Sarah and I take her place."

Hazel alone would be inconvenient; but Hazel and Sarah——

"Have you told Sarah yet?" I asked. "It seems to me that Sarah is a trifle ubiquitous, not to say multitudinous. There will be other women there. Can't you leave her at home?"

"I'm afraid not," she sighed. "Not without a fuss. But I haven't said anything to her about it, and don't you say anything to her. Maybe I can get rid of her somehow."

Which was highly satisfactory; for I thought that for one who, after all, was only a hired employee, Sarah was taking a good deal on herself. And the end was not yet. As we were leaving the café, she drew me aside and snarled grimly:

"I got my eye on you, young man. I hope I ain't averse to young folks havin' their innocent pleasure, but no foolishness! You hear me. You was holdin' the child

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entirely too tight in that there last dance. If I see anything more like that I'm goin' to walk right out on the floor of one of these dens of vice and take her away from you. You hear me. I'm on to you."

What could I say? I couldn't tell her that I usually danced in skirmish formation, and that if anybody had been snuggling, it was Hazel.

CHAPTER NINE

It Starts to Rain

I DINED with the two of them at the Plaza, and went home convinced that despite Sarah I had done about as well as possible with my day. But I felt a little uneasy about Agnes, so as soon as I got in I telephoned to Wyman at Maplecrest. She had arrived, I learned, before dinner—.

"Did she ask for me?" I inquired.

"Oh, yes. She asked for you, and I told her you'd gone down to town to amuse her. I dated up your departure about four hours so that the story would hang together; and she feels very grateful to you for your thoughtfulness."

"But Gushmore? Has she seen him?"

"Trust me, my boy. She's said how-do-you-do, and no more. She had dinner with me and a blameless professor from Radcliffe, who wouldn't know what to do with money if somebody gave it to her. You and your college are safe."

I drew a long breath of relief.

"I haven't put too much of a burden on you?"

"My dear boy, don't speak of a burden. This marvelous Norse goddess a burden? Why, I could think of nothing more pleasurable than to sit and look at her by the hour. You've done me a favor."

"I thought perhaps all women would remind you of——"

"No," he said heroically, "I strive to control my emotions. One must, you know; life goes on. I can endure association with other women much better than I had expected."

The moment seemed favorable.

"Then will you take care of her till Monday morning?" I asked. "I'm tied up in town. Tell her that—tell her that I met the head of my department in the university, and that he wanted to spend to-morrow helping me plan my book. Yes. Tell her that."

"All right," he laughed. "I'll tell her that. And it's a good thing that I'm going to tell her and not you."

"It happens to be true," I said. "I am going to work on my book."

"Doubtless it is true," said Alan, "but it doesn't sound true. However, it will sound true when I tell it."

"And you'll take good care of her?" I persisted. "See that she doesn't get bored, or isn't driven to Gushmore for amusement?"

"Leave her to me, Alec. Leave her to me."

It occurred to me after I had rung off that it was conceivably unwise to leave her to him. Of course his heart was still shattered by his recent misfortune; but Alan's heart had been shattered by other misfortunes and had mended rapidly enough. He was evidently tremendously struck with her; he might be a rival more dangerous than Gushmore.... But he wouldn't be dangerous to our college; and just now I wasn't sure that a rival for Agnes's favor might not be good for me. If the fires of jealousy were blown to flame, I'd find out if I really cared anything for her.

So I turned back to my table, stacked high with books and professional magazines, and began to think about the great volume I was going to write. It was a relief, that volume. I needed it. I had had too much of feminine companionship in the last few days; I'd feel a good deal better if for the next twenty-four hours I thought about nothing but the architecture and social life of ancient Rome. But I had hardly more than settled down with a notebook and my reading-lamp when the doorbell rang. I wondered whether or not I ought to answer it; but it soon became evident that it would be rung continuously until somebody did answer it, and the noise of a doorbell can make a three-room apartment uninhabitable in an amazingly short time. So I opened the door and found a mail-carrier with a special-delivery letter.

My heart thumped as I recognized the queer cubist handwriting. It was from Lucile and the first letter she'd written me since her marriage.

I sat down in my Morris chair, lit a cigaret, and opened it.

ALEC DEAR: Chicago, Friday.

I hardly know how to begin this, for I haven't seen you in three years—or is it four?—and you may have changed and become terribly different. But I don't believe you have; it isn't like you. And if you're still the Alec of the old days at Wyndham you'll meet my train at the Grand Central at nine-forty-five Sunday morning.

Alec, I am leaving my husband. What this means—all the terrible storms of emotion that it means—I can't tell you till I see you; I can't write it. Indeed, I can hardly realize it myself as yet. But I see at last what a terrible mistake I made when I married Frank. I suppose he means well, but he's—well, he's just Frank, that's all. He can't feel the things I feel, or even understand that I feel them. For seven years I have endured a life that outraged my finer sensibilities every day; now I can endure no more.

There is a letter, Alec, that I treasure as one of the few really golden possessions of my life. It's the one you wrote to me when I told you I was going to marry Frank. Do you remember that letter, Alec? I cried a good deal over it. You said that if ever I needed a friend I had only to call on you and you'd come to me from the ends of the earth.

You meant that then; I wonder if you'd mean it now. But *you* would, you dear boy; you'd keep faith to the end. And I've learned by this time, Alec, how pitifully few are the men who will do that.

Don't be frightened; I'm not asking you to come to me; I'm coming to you, to you and New York, to build my life over again on new foundations. And I'm not going to ask anything of you in the name of those wonderful days at Wyndham. I do need you desperately, but not in an emotional way. Emotion has made a wreck of my life. I want you to stand by and help me when I start again in the big, cold world. I'll need somebody to cheer me up when I get blue and begin to lose my nerve; and you're the best friend any woman ever had. There isn't another man in the world I could ask to do this; but I know you and I need you. Will you help me, Alec? But, you dear, I know you will. I'll tell you all about it on Sunday.

With love

LUCILE.

Well .... I received this information with somewhat mixed emotions. There was a good deal that might be said about it. Of course I was glad she'd left Frank Pemberton. He was a hard, businesslike person with a hard gray eye and a primly cropped brown mustache; you thought of him as wearing a brown suit and a derby hat, and biting the end off a long cigar while he ran a ticker-tape through one hand, and looking at you with an expression that said, "I don't know who you are, but you don't look like much to me." I imagined that seven years with him would have outraged anybody's finer sensibilities; particularly those of an Aprilly, tears-and-sunshine person like Lucile.

But she was leaving him at a highly inconvenient time. By a piece of luck I'd be able to meet her train—suppose the letter had come while I was at Maplecrest! —but during her first week in New York, the critical week, when she'd be getting settled, and I suppose, hunting a job, I couldn't give her much attention.

But of course I could! This was Lucile. I owed her all that I could do for her, for the sake of those old days in college. After all, she was the only girl I'd ever really cared for, and the only girl who'd ever really cared for me; and I'd been thinking of her just now as if she were another Agnes or another Hazel. And how many times I'd thought of her in the last week! Often enough, certainly, to justify me in dropping everything else to help her now that she was so miraculously coming to me. It had seemed too much ever to hope—

OF COURSE I had hoped for it—even expected it, before the fever left my romantic imagination and I returned to common sense. For a full year after she married him I was convinced that she was going to find him wanting; that she'd realize her horrible mistake, and tell him about it; and that maybe he'd shoot himself, or jump in Lake Michigan, upon hearing the dread news, so that eventually we two could be happy ever after.

But that was years ago. I knew more, now. Lucile, to judge from her letter, seemed to be heart-whole and fancy-free; she wasn't coming back to me, she was merely going away from him. Perhaps she would come to take an interest in me, later; but in the circumstances I couldn't rush the matter. She was coming to me for help; sentiment would have to be kept out of sight. It was a point of honor.

And perhaps it was something more. I was tremendously eager to see her, of course; I was flattered by her coming to me when she was in trouble; but to get out of this new situation anything like the old thrills that used to shake me when I did no more than carry her books to lectures back at Wyndham, I had to think back to those old days, and think hard. After all, it was seven years.

But something like the old thrill came back of its own accord the next morning, when I arrived at the station, breathless and worried, five minutes after her train was due, and found that it had been delayed by a wreck. It was a freight wreck; Lucile was late but entirely safe; but I had a moment or so of quite real, if rather foolish alarm, whose effect didn't entirely disappear during the next two hours. And when at last her train was bulletined to arrive at 12:20 I was really excited.

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IN RED *and* GOLD

(*Continued from page 22*)

death intrigue of Chinese officialdom and over which hung suspended the silken power of an Oriental throne. Doane's personal problem shrank into nothing—a flitting memory of a little outbreak of egotism—as he studied the old face on which the revealing hand of age had inscribed wisdom, kindliness and shrewdness.

Soft footfalls sounded; then after a moment, a sharper sound that Doane assumed, with a slight quickening of the imagination, to be the high wooden clogs of a Manchu lady, until he realized that no clogs could move so lightly; no, these were little Western shoes.

A YOUNG woman appeared, slender and comely, dressed in a tailored suit that could have come only from New York, and smiling with shy eagerness. She was of good height like the Manchus of the old stock, the face nearly oval, quite unpainted and softly pretty, with a broad forehead that curved prettily back under the parted hair, arched eyebrows, eyes more nearly straight than slanting, that opened a thought less widely than those of Western people, and with a quaint, wholly charming friendliness in her smile.

He felt her sense of freedom; and knew as she tried to take his huge hand in her own small one that she carried her Western ways, as her own people would phrase it, with a proud heart. She was one of those aliens who would be happily American, eager to show her kinship with the great land of fine free traditions.

And holding that small hand, looking down at her, Doane found his perhaps overstrained nerves responding warmly to her fine youth and health. He reflected on the amazing change in Chinese official life that made it even remotely possible for the Viceroy to present his daughter with a heart as proud as hers. The change had come about during the term of Doane's own residence. America, then, was not alone in changing. It was a shaking, puzzled, and puzzling world:

"This," his Excellency was saying, "is my daughter, Hui Fei."

"I am very pleas' to meet you," said Hui Fei.

They sat then. The girl became at once, as in America, the center of the talk. Though of the heedlessness not uncommonly found among American girls she had none. She was prettily, sensitively, deferential to her father: somewhere back of the bright surface brain from which came the quick eager talk and the friendly smile, deep in her nature, lay the sense of reverence for those riper in years and in authority that was the deepest strain in her race. Yet in her talk she dwelt on things almost utterly American—the brightness of New York, the Yale-Harvard football game—a motoring tour through the White Mountains, happy summers at the seashore.

Doane watched her, speaking only at intervals, wondering if there might not be some deeper understanding of her present situation. He could not surely make out. She had humor, and when asked if it did not seem strange to step abruptly back into the old life, she spoke laughingly of her many little mistakes in etiquette.

Her English he found charming. She was continually slipping back into it from the Mandarin tongue she tried to use, and as continually, with great gayety, reaching back into Chinese for the equivalent phrase. She had so nearly conquered the usual difficulty with the l's and r's as to confuse them only when she spoke hurriedly. At these times, too, she would leave off final consonants. The long e became then the short i. Doane even smiled, with an inner sense of pleasure, at her pretty emphasis when she once converted "people" into "pipple." She was, unmistakably, a young woman of charm and personality. Despite the quaintness of her speech, she was accustomed to thinking in the new tongue. Her command of it was excellent; better than would commonly be found in America. All of which, of course, intensified the problem.

His Excellency sat back, smoked comfortably, and looked on her with frankly indulgent pride.

A servant came with a message, bowing low. The Viceroy excused himself for a moment, leaving his daughter and Doane together.

Doane asked himself, during the pause that followed his departure, what the observant attendants beyond the screen would be thinking. The situation, from any familiar Chinese point of view, was unthinkable. Yet here he sat; and there, her brows drawn together (he saw now) in sober thought, sat delightful Miss Hui Fei.

She said, in a low voice, while looking out at the river:

"Mr. Doane, no matter what you may think—I mus' see you. This evening. You mus' tell me where. It mus' not be known to any one. There are spies here."

Doane glanced up; then, too, looked away. There could be no question now of the girl's deeper feeling. She was determined. Her tone was honest and forthright, with the unthinking courage of youth. It would be her father, of course.

But his mind had gone blank. He knew not what to think or say.

"Please!" she murmured. "There is no one else. You mus' help us. Tell me—Father will be coming back."

And then Griggsby Doane heard his own voice saying quietly:

"The boat deck is the only place. You will find a sort of ladder near the stern. If you can—

"I will go up there."

"It will be only just after midnight that I could arrange to be there."

HIS Excellency returned then. And Doane took his leave. He had been but a few minutes in his own cabin when two lictors of his Excellency's suite appeared, each with a lacquered tray, on one of which was a small chest of tea, wrapped in red paper lettered in gold and bearing the seal stamp of the private estate of T'ang Chi T'ung; on the other an object of more than a foot in height carefully wound about with cotton cloth.

Doane dismissed the lictors with a Mexican dollar each and unwrapped the larger object, which the servant had placed with

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great care on his berth. It proved to be a Pi, a disk of carven jade, in color a perfect specimen of the pure greenish-white tint that is so highly prized by Chinese collectors. The diameter was hardly less than ten inches, and the actual width of the stone from the circular inner opening to the outer rim about four inches. It stood on edge set in a pedestal of blackwood, the carving of which was of unusual delicacy.

The pedestal was, naturally, modern, but Doane, with a mounting pulse, studied the designs cut into the stone itself. That cutting had been done not later than the Han dynasty, certainly within two hundred years of the birth of Chirst.

CHAPTER FOUR

Intrigue

I

THE *Yen Hsin* would arrive at Kiu Kiang in mid-afternoon. Half an hour earlier Doane, on the lower deck, came upon a group of his Excellency's soldiers—brown, deep-chested men, picturesque in their loose blue trousers bound in above the ankles, and their blue turbans and gray cartridge-belts—conversing excitedly in whispers behind the stack of coffins near the stern. At sight of him the gathering broke up and slipped away.

A moment later, passing forward along the corridor beside the engine-room, he heard his name—

"Mr. Doane, if you please!" this in English.

He turned. Just within the doorway of one of the low-priced cabins stood a pedler he had observed about the lower decks; a thin Chinese with an overbred head that was shaped, beneath the cap, like a skull without flesh upon it; the eyes concealed behind smoked glasses.

"May I have a word with you, Mr. Doane?"

The mate considered; then, stooping, entered the tiny cabin. The pedler closed the door; quietly shot the bolt; then removed his cap and the cue with it, exposing a full head of stubbly black hair, trimmed, as is said, pompadour. The glasses came off next, discovering wide, alert eyes. And now, without the cap, the head, despite the hair and the seriously intellectual face, looked, balanced on its thin neck, more than ever like a skull.

"You will not know me, Mr. Doane. I am Sun Shi-pi of Shanghai. I was attached, as interpreter, to the Yamen of the Taotai. I left his service some months ago to join the Republican revolutionary party. I was arrested shortly after that at Nanking and condemned to death, but his Excellency, the viceroy——"

"T'ang?"

"Yes. He is on this boat. He released me on condition that I go to Japan. I kept my word—to that extent; I went to Japan—but I could not keep my word in spirit. My life is consecrated to the cause of the Chinese republic. Nothing else matters. I returned to Shanghai, and was made commander there of the 'Dare-to-dies.' You did not know of such an organization? You will, then, before the winter is gone. We shall be heard from. There are other such companies—at Canton, at Wuchang, at Nanking—at every center."

Doane seated himself on the narrow couch and studied the quietly eager young man.

"You speak English with remarkable ease," he said.

"Oh, yes. I studied at Chicago University. And at Tokio University I took post-graduate work."

"And you are frank."

"I can trust you. You are known to us, Mr. Doane. Wu Ting Fang trusts you—and Sun Yat Sen, our leader, he knows and trusts you."

"I did know Sun Yat Sen, when he was a medical student."

"He knows you well. He has mentioned your name to us. That is why I am speaking to you. America is with us. We can trust Americans."

Doane's mind was ranging swiftly about the situation.

"You are running a risk," he said.

Sun Shi-pi shrugged his shoulders. "I shall hardly survive the revolution. That is not expected among the 'Dare-to-dies!'"

"If his Excellency's soldiers find you here they will kill you now."

"The officers would, of course. Many of the soldiers are with us. Anyway, it doesn't matter."

"What is your errand?"

"I will tell you. The revolution, as you doubtless know, is fully planned."

"I've assumed so. There has been much talk. And then, of course, the outbreak in Sze-chuan."

"That was premature. It was the plan to strike in the spring. This fighting in Sze-chuan has caused much confusion. Sun Yat Sen is in America. He is going to England, and can hardly reach China within two months. He will bring money enough for all our needs. He is the organizer, the directing genius of the new republic. But the Sze-chuan outbreak has set all the young hotheads afire."

"I am told that the throne has sent Tuan Fang out there to put down the disturbance. But we have had no news lately."

"That is because the wires are cut. Tuan Fang will never come back. We will pay five thousand taels, cash, to the bearer of his head, and ask no questions. We must exterminate the Manchus. It has finally come down to that. It is the only way out. But we must pull together. Did you know that the Wu Chang republicans plan to strike at once?"

"No."

"I have been sent there to beg them to wait. That is our gravest danger now. If we pull together, we shall win. If our emotions run away with our judgment ——"

"The throne will defeat your forces piecemeal."

"EXACTLY. My one fear is that I may not reach Wu Chang in time. But"—with a careless gesture—"that is as it may be. I will tell you now why I spoke to you. We need you. Our organization is incomplete as yet, naturally. One matter of the greatest importance is that our spirit be understood from the first by foreign countries. There is an enormous task—diplomatic publicity, you might call it—which you, Mr. Doane, are peculiarly fitted to undertake. You know both China and the West. You are a philosopher of mature judgment. You would work in association with Dr. Wu Ting Fang at our Shanghai

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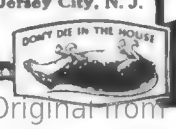

ROUGH ON RATS

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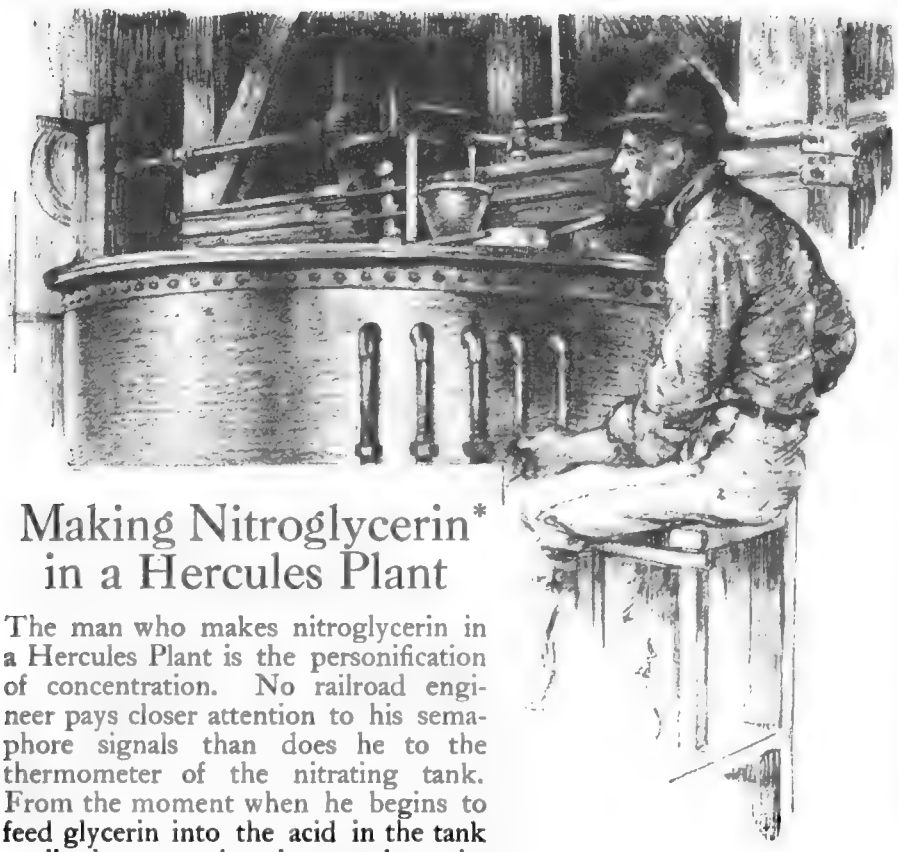

Making Nitroglycerin* in a Hercules Plant

The man who makes nitroglycerin in a Hercules Plant is the personification of concentration. No railroad engineer pays closer attention to his semaphore signals than does he to the thermometer of the nitrating tank. From the moment when he begins to feed glycerin into the acid in the tank until the operation is complete the thermometer is his guide.

It is important that the temperature of the mixture in the tank be kept uniform. If glycerin is added too rapidly the temperature rises, if too slowly it falls. So with eye on thermometer and hand on valve controlling the glycerin flow, the Hercules "N. G." maker follows the process minute by minute until its completion.

To just such watchful care as this is the uniform high quality of Hercules Explosives largely due. The men who work in the twelve Hercules plants realize the importance of the great tasks performed by Hercules Explosives. As a result, wherever these explosives are used—in the building of railroads or highways, in the mining of metals and minerals, to increase the crops on a farm or dig the foundation for a city hotel—their giant power is never found lacking.

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**Nitroglycerin is made by combining, in exactly the proper proportions, glycerin with a mixture of nitric and sulphuric acids. The combination takes place in a tank equipped with brine coils (for cooling purposes) and agitators which insure thorough agitation.*

HERCULES POWDERS

offices. There will be money. Will you consider this?"

"It is a wholly new thought," Doane replied slowly. "I should have to give it very serious consideration."

"But you are in sympathy with our aims?"

"In a general way, certainly. Even though I may not share your optimism."

"On your return to Shanghai, would you be willing to call at once on Doctor Wu and discuss the matter?"

"Yes—yes, I will do that. I must leave you now. We are nearly at Kiu Kiang."

Sun, glancing out the window, raised his hand. Doane looked; two small German cruisers, the Kaiser's flag at the gaff, were steaming by up-stream.

"They know," murmured Sun, with meaning. "I wish to God I could find their means of information. They all know. From the Japanese in particular nothing seems to be hid. Two or three of your American warships are already up there. And the English, naturally, in force."

"They must be on hand to protect the foreign colony at Hankow. The Szechuan trouble would justify such a move."

But Sun shook his head. "They *know*," he repeated. Then he clasped Doane's hand. "However, that is a detail. It is now war. You will find events marching fast—faster, I fear, than we Republicans wish. Good-by now. You will call on Doctor Wu."

II

THE steamer moved slowly in toward the landing-hulk. Doane, from the boat-deck, by the after bell-pull, looked across at the park-like foreign bund with its embankment of masonry and its trees. Behind lay, compactly, the walled city. Everything looked as it had always looked—the curious crowd along the railing, the water-carriers passing down and up the steps, the eager, shouting swarm of street beggars. Below, the coolies swung out from the hulk, ready to make their usual break-neck leap over green water to the approaching steamer. Now they were jumping. The passengers were leaning out from the promenade-deck to watch and applaud.

Doane's thoughts, as he went mechanically through his familiar duties, wandered off inland, past the battlements and towers of the ancient city to the thousands of other cities and villages and farmsteads beyond; and he asked himself if the scores of millions of lethargic minds in all those centers of population could really be awakened from their sleep of six hundred years and stirred into action.

Could a republic possibly mean anything real to those minds? The habit of mere endurance, of bare existence, was so deep-seated, the struggle to live so intense, the opportunity so slight. Sun Shi-pi and his kind were a semi-Western product. They were, when all was said and done, an exotic breed. They were the ardent adventurous young; and they were the few. There had always been a throne in China, always extortionate mandarins, always a popular acceptance of conditions.

The lines were out now. And suddenly a blue-clad soldier climbed over the rail below, balanced along the stern hawser, leaped to the hulk, and was about to disappear among the coolies there when a

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rifle-shot cracked and he fell. He seemed to fall, if anything, slightly before the shot. Another soldier, following close, was caught by a second shot as he was balancing on the hawser, and spun headlong into the water where the propeller still churned.

A few moments later, when he passed among the white passengers, it became clear to Doane that they knew nothing of the casual tragedy astern. They were all pressing ashore for a walk in the quaint native city, eager to buy the worked silver that is traditionally sold there. The slim girl in the middy blouse had apparently captured young Rocky Kane; they strolled off across the bund together. But Dawley Kane remained aboard stretched out comfortably in a deck-chair, listening thoughtfully to the stocky little Japanese, one Kato, who was by now generally known to be his *alter ego* in the one matter of buying objects of Oriental art.

None of these passengers knew or cared about China. Excepting this Kato. Him Doane was continually encountering below decks, chatting smilingly in Chinese with the good-natured soldiers. His work along the river, doubtless, ranged over a wider field than his present employer would ever learn. It would be interesting, now, to know what he was saying, talking so rapidly and always, of course, smiling. The rest of this upper-deck white man's existence Doane dismissed from his mind as he went about his work. It was all too familiar. Though later he thought of Rocky Kane. The boy, wild though he might be, had attractive qualities. It was not pleasant to see that thin girl get her hands on him. Just one more evil influence.

HE THOUGHT, at this juncture, of the — the word came — appalling change in himself. That he, once a fervid missionary, could stand back like a sophisticated European, and let the wandering and vicious and broken human creatures about him go their various ways, as might be, was disturbing, was even saddening. Something, apparently, had died in him. Sun had called him a philosopher. The Oriental, of course, even the blazing revolutionist, admired this passive quality, this fatalistic acceptance of the fact. He sighed. To be a philosopher was, then, to be emotionally dead. The church had been taken out of his life, leaving—nothing. A mate on a river steamer in China. Life had gone quite topsy-turvy. Even the amazing courtesy of his Excellency—it was that, when you considered—and this profound compliment from the revolutionary junta seemed but incidents. Too many promises had smiled at Doane, these years of his spiritual Odyssey—smiled and faded to nothing—to permit an easy hope of anything new and beautiful. He was beginning to believe that a man can not build and live two lives. And he had built and lived one.

Captain Benjamin found him; a dogged little captain with dull fright in his eyes.

"It's happened," he said, trying desperately to attain an off-hand manner. "Company wire. They're fighting at Wu Chang. What do you know about that?"

Doane was silent. It was extraordinarily difficult, here by this calm old city on a sunny afternoon, to believe that it was, as Sun had put it, war.

"We're to tie up," the captain went on, "until further orders. The foreign concessions at Hankow were safe enough this

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ST. LOUIS, one of the largest hardware markets in the United States, needs plants for the manufacture of small hardware, fine tools, machine tools and tool machinery. Most of these products to supply the great St. Louis trade territory must now be bought in the East. The sale of hardware and kindred lines in St. Louis last year was approximately $102,000,000. Much of the raw material is shipped from the Mississippi Valley, manufactured in the East, and the finished product again shipped back to St. Louis.

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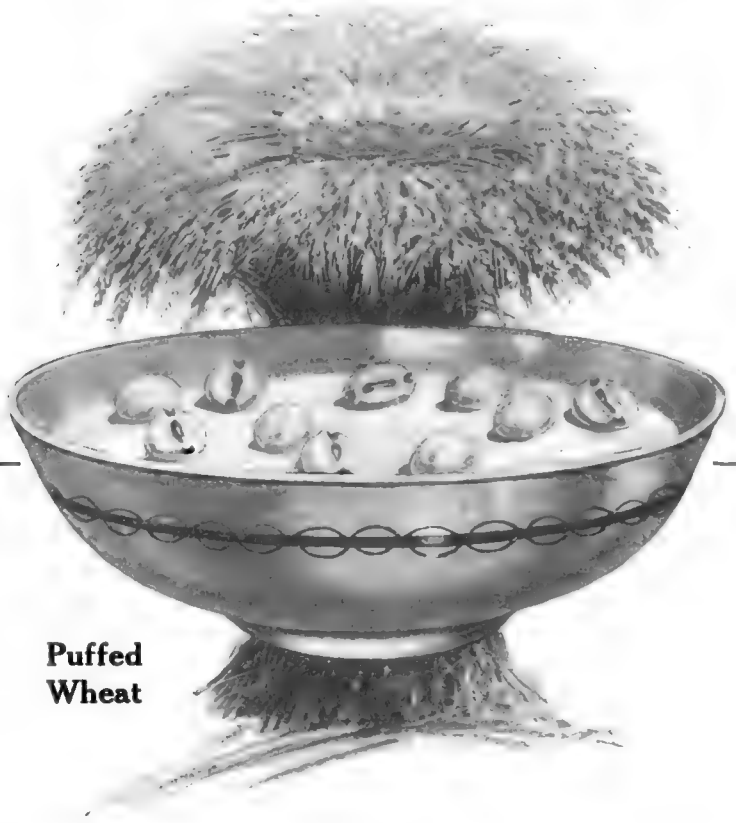

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Puffed Wheat and Puffed Rice are whole grains. Corn Puffs are corn hearts puffed.

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Serve all of them in all the ways you can, for no other form of grain food can compare with these.

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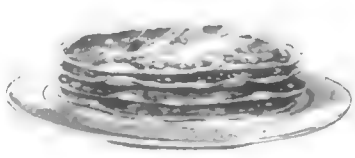

Now we make a pancake flour mixed with ground Puffed Rice It makes nut-like, fluffy pancakes—the finest ever tasted. The flour is self-raising, so the batter is made in a moment. Try this new dainty. Ask for Puffed Rice Pancake Flour.

The Quaker Oats Company
Sole Makers

noon, but with an artillery battle just across the river, and an imperial army moving down from the north over the railway, they stand a lot of show, they do."

"I wonder if they'll send us on."

"What difference will it make?" The captain's voice was rising. "You know as well as I do that they'll be fighting at Nanking before we could get back there. Here too, for that matter. I tell you the whole river'll be ablaze by to-morrow. This bloody old river! And us on a Manchu-owned boat! A lot o' chance we stand."

III

THE sightseers strolled across the shady bund, passed a stone residence or two and a warehouse, and made their way through the vaulted gateway in the massive city wall. Little Miss Andrews was escorted by young Mr. Braker. Miss Means walked with one of the customs men. Two or three others of the men wandered on ahead. Rocky Kane and the thin girl in the middy blouse brought up in the rear.

As they entered the crowded city within the wall, a babel of sound assailed their ears—the beating of drums and gongs, clanging cymbals, a musket shot or two, firecrackers; and underlying these, rising even above them, never slackening, a continuous roar of voices. The teachers paused in alarm, but the customs man smilingly assured them that in a busy Chinese city the noise was to be taken for granted.

Nearly every shop along the narrow way was open to the street, and at each opening men swarmed—bargaining, chaffering, quarreling. The only women to be seen were those in black trousers on a wheelbarrow that pushed briskly through the crowds, the barrow-man shouting musically as he shuffled along. Beggars wailed from the niches between the buildings. Dogs snarled and barked—hundreds of dogs, fighting over scraps of offal among the hundreds of nearly naked children.

A mandarin came through in a chair of green lacquer and rich gold ornament, supercilious, fat, carried by eight bearers and followed by imposing officials who wore robes of black and red and hats with red plumes. As the street was a scant ten feet in width and the crowds must flatten themselves against the walls to make way, the roar grew louder and higher in pitch.

There were shops with nothing but oils, in huge jars of earthenware or in wicker baskets lined with stout paper. There were tea-shops with high pyramids of the familiar red-and-gold parcels, and other pyramids of the brick tea that is carried on camel-back to Russia. There were the shops of the idol-makers, and others where were displayed the carven animals and tiny houses and carts and implements that are burned in ancestor worship, and the tinsel shoes. There were shops where remarkably large coffins were piled in square heaps, some of glistening lacquer with the ideograph characters carven or raised in new gold. There were varnishers, lacquerers, tobacconists; open eating-houses in which could be seen rows of pans set into brickwork. There were displays of bean-cakes, melon-seeds and quaint drugs.

Two Manchu soldiers sauntered by in uniforms of red and faded blue; fans stuck in their belts and painted paper umbrellas

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folded in their hands. One bore a hooded falcon on his wrist.

Miss Andrews sniffed the penetrating odor of all China, that was spiced just here with smells of garlic cooking and frying fish and pork and strong oils and—like the perfume of a dainty lady in a crowded French theatre—an unexpected whiff of burning incense. She looked up between the high, close walls, on which hung, close together, the long, elaborate signs of the tradesmen, black and green and red with gold; always the gold. Across the narrow opening from roof to roof extended a bamboo framework over which was drawn coarse yellow matting or blue cotton cloths; and through these the sunbeams, diffused, glowed in a warm twilight, with here and there a chance ray slanting down with dazzling brightness on a bright golden sign character.

"It's all rather terrifying," murmured Miss Andrews at Braker's ear, "but its beautiful—wonderful! I never dreamed of China being so human and real."

"And to think," said he eagerly, "that it has always been like this, and always will be. It was just so in the days of Abraham and Isaac. The one people in the world that doesn't change. It's their whole philosophy—passive non-resistance, peace. And do you know, I'm beginning to wonder if they aren't right about it. For here they are, you know. Greece is dead. Rome's dead, and Assyria, and Egypt. But here the Chinese are. It's their philosophy that's done it, I suppose. Almost be worth while to come out here and live a while, when our part of the world gets too upset and confusing. Just for a sense of stability—somewhere."

These two young persons, dreaming fancifully of security while the earth prepared to rock beneath their feet!

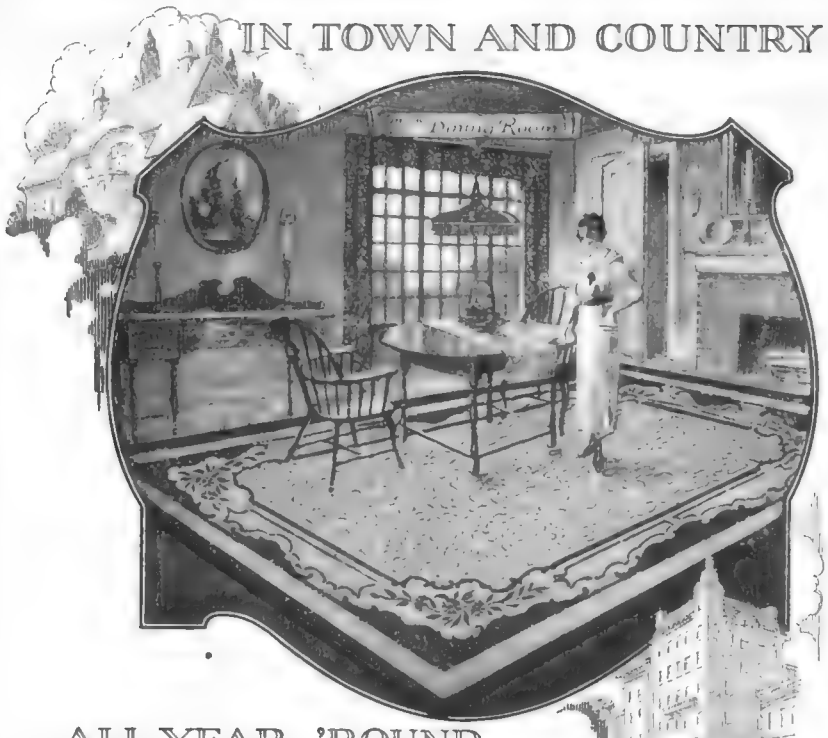
ROCKY KANE and the slim girl had dropped out of sight, lingering at this shop and that. The party later found them at a silversmith's counter. They had bought a heap of the silver dragon-boxes and cigaret cases; and then devised a fresh little idea in gambling, weighing ten Chinese dollars against another ten in the balanced scales, the heavier lot winning. Young Kane had got through his clothing somehow, there in the street, to his money-belt, for he held it now carelessly rolled in one hand. He was flushed, laughing softly. He and the thin girl were getting on, plainly.

"Come along, you two," remarked the customs man. "We stop only two hours here."

The young couple, gathering up their purchases and the heaps of silver dollars, slowly followed.

"That was great!" exclaimed Rocky Kane. The thin girl, he had decided, was a good fellow. She was always quiet, discreet, attractive. In her curiously unobtrusive way she seemed to know everything. The face was cold in appearance. Yet she was friendly. Made you feel that nothing you might say could disturb her. He wondered what could be going on behind those light, quiet eyes, behind the thin lips. The men had remarked on the fact that she was traveling alone. She was a provocative person—the curiously youthful costume; the black hair gathered at the neck and tied, girlishly, with a bow—really an exciting person. The way she

IN TOWN AND COUNTRY



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had taken that little scene out on deck with the gorgeous Chinese girl—Rocky knew nothing of the distinctions between the Asiatic peoples—who spoke English quite as a matter of course. Though she took everything that way. This little gambling, for instance. She loved it—was quick at it.

"I'm wondering about you," he said, as they wandered along. "Wondering—you know—why you're traveling this way. Have you got folks up river?"

"Oh, no," she replied—never in his life had he known such self-control; there wasn't even color in her voice, just that quiet easy way, that sense of giving out no vitality whatever—"Oh, no. I have business at Hankow and Peking."

That was all she said. The subject was closed. And yet, she hadn't minded his asking. She was still friendly; he felt that. His feeling rose. He giggled softly.

"Lord!" he said, "if only the pater wasn't along!"

"Does he hold you down?"

"Does he? Brought me out here to discipline me. Trying to make me go back to college—make a grind of me. I was just thinking—here's a nice girl to play with, and plenty of fun around, and not a thing to drink. He gave me fits at Shanghai because I took a few drinks."

"You have the other stuff," she said.

He turned nervously; stared at her. But she remained as clamly unresponsive as ever. Merely explained: "I smelt it, outside your cabin. You ought to be careful—shut your window tight when you smoke it."

He held his breath a moment; then realized, with an uprush of feeling warmer than any he had felt before, that he had her sympathy. She would never tell, never in the world. The big mate might, but she wouldn't.

She added this:

"I can give you a drink. Wait until things settle down on the boat and come to my cabin—number four. Just be sure there's no one in the corridor. And don't knock. The door will be ajar. Step right in. Do you like saké?"

"Do I—say, you're great! You're wonderful. I never knew a girl like you."

She took this little outbreak as she had taken all his others, without even a smile. It was, he felt, as if they had always known each other. They understood—perfectly.

If he had been told, then, that this girl had been during two or three vivid years one of the most conspicious underworld characters along the Coast—that Coast where the underworld was still, at the time of our narrative, openly part of what little world there was—a gambler and blackmailer of what would very nearly have to be called attainment—he would have found belief impossible, would have defended her with the blind impulsiveness of youth.

IV

THERE was to be a delay; the steamer would not proceed at the scheduled hour, perhaps not until night. Disgruntled white passengers settled down, in berth and deck-chair, to make the best of it. There was, it came vaguely to light, a little trouble up the river; an outbreak of some sort. But they were, it was said, safe enough here.

Rocky Kane, a feverish flush below his temples, slipped stealthily along the corridor.

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At number four he paused; glanced nervously about; then, grinning, pushed open the door softly and closed it behind him. The strange, thin Miss Carmichael was combing out her black hair. With a confused little laugh he extended his arms. But she shook her head.

"Sit down and be sensible," she said. "Here's the saké."

She produced a bottle and poured a small drink into a large glass. He gulped it down.

"Aren't you drinking with me?" he asked.

"I never take anything."

"You're a funny girl. How'd you come to have this?"

"It was given to me. You'd better slip along. I can't ask you to stay."

"But when am I going to see you, for a good visit?"

"Oh, there'll be chances enough. Here we are."

"That's so. Looks as if we'd stay here a while, too. There's a battle on, you know, up at Wuchang and Hankow. Big row. We get all the news from Kato. He's that Japanese that father has with him. The revolutionists have captured Wuchang, and are getting ready to cross over. The imperial army's being rushed down to defend Hankow. Regular doings. Shells were falling in the foreign concessions this morning. Kato's got all the news there is. It's a question whether we'll go on at all. You see the Manchus own this boat, and the Republicans would certainly get after us. There are enough foreign warships up there to protect us, of course. How about another drink?"

"Better not. Your father will notice it."

"He won't know where I got it," Rocky chuckled. He felt himself an adventurous and quite manly old devil—here in the mysterious girl's cabin, watching her as she smoothed and tied her flowing hair, and drinking the potent fermentation from Japan.

"It's funny—nothing seems to surprise you. Did you know they were fighting up there?"

"No."

"Wouldn't you be a little frightened if we were to steam right into a battle?"

"I shouldn't enjoy it particularly."

"Aren't you even interested? Is there anything you're interested in?"

"Certainly—I have my interests. You must go—really. No, be quiet! Some one will hear! We can visit to-night—out on deck."

"But you're—I don't understand. Here we are—like this—and you shoo me out—I don't even know your first name."

"My name is Dixie—but I don't want you to call me that."

"Why not? We're friends, aren't we?"

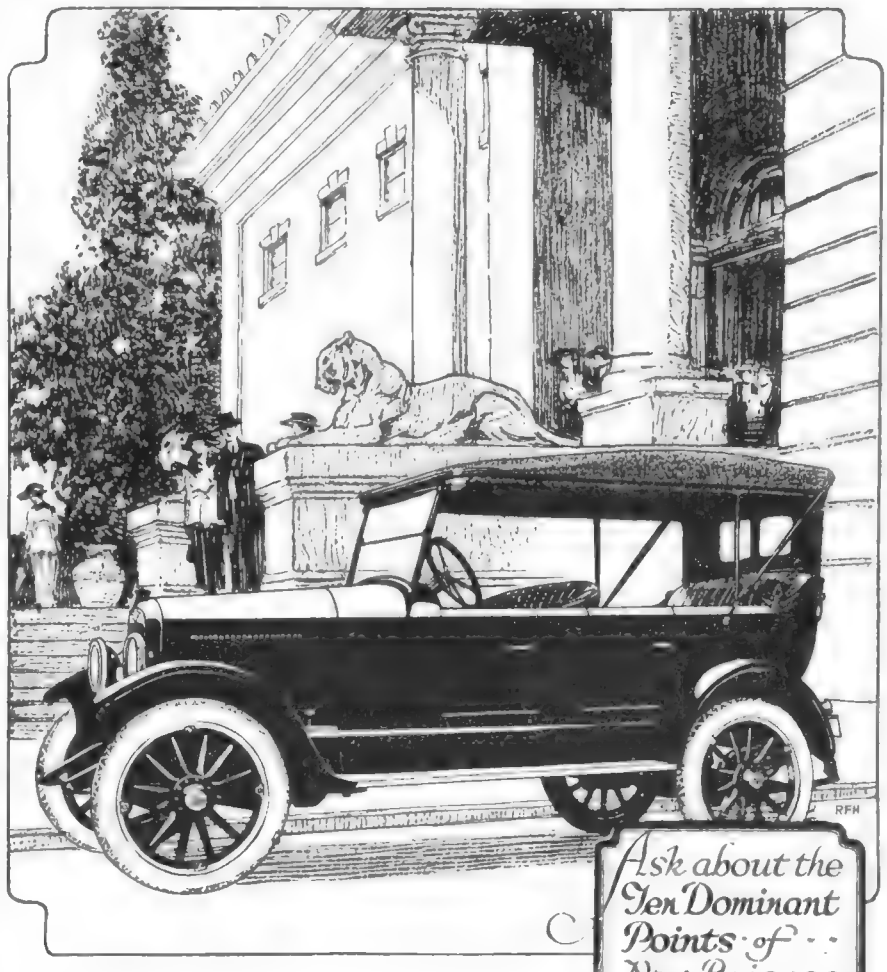
"Of course, but they'd hear you."

"Oh!"

"Wait—I'll look before you go. It's all clear now."

THEY visited long after dinner. He was brimming with later advices from the center of trouble up the river. Mostly she listened, studying him with a mind that was keener and quicker and shrewder in its sordid wisdom than he would, perhaps, ever understand.

Everything that Kato had told his father and himself he passed eagerly on to her. He was a man indeed now; making an



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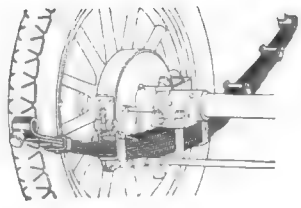

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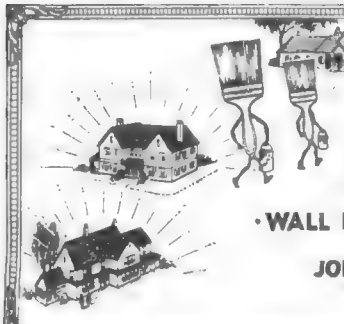

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enormous impression; possessor of inside information of a vital sort—the viceroy's priceless collection of jewels, jades, porcelains and historic paintings, which Kato was advising his father to pick up for a song while red revolution raged about the old Manchu; the dramatic plans of the Republicans, their emblems and a pass-word (Kato knew everything)—"Shui-lui"—"union is strength"; the small meeting below decks ending in the death of two soldiers. He dramatized this last flowingly as he related it.

The girl, lying still in her chair, listened as if but casually interested, while her mind gathered and related to one another the probable facts beneath his words. She was considering his dominant quality of ungoverned hot-blooded youth. Of discretion he clearly enough had none; which fact, viewed from her standpoint, was both important and dangerous. For the information he so volubly conveyed she had immediate use. That was settled, however cloudy the details. But this further question as to the advisability of holding the boy personally to herself she was still weighing. Two courses of action lay before her, each leading to a possible rich prize. If the two could be combined, well and good; she would pursue both. But it was not easy to sense out a possible combination. The obvious first thought was to go wholeheartedly after the larger of the prizes and as wholeheartedly forget the other. As usual in all such choices, however, the lesser prize was the easier to secure. Perhaps, even, by working—the word "working" was her own—with great rapidity she might make—again her word—a killing with this wild youth in time to discard him and pursue the still richer prize.

Because he was, at least, the bird in hand, she submitted passively when his fingers found hers under the steamer rug. Twilight was thickening into night now on the river. And they were in a dim corner.

HE WAS, she saw, at the point of almost utter disorganization. He was sensitive, emotional, quite spoiled. It was almost too easy to do what she might choose with him. It would be amusing to tantalize him, if there were time; watch him struggle in the net of his own nervously unripe emotions; perhaps shake him down (we are yet again dropping into her phraseology) without the surrender of a *quid pro quo*. That would please her sense of cool, sharp power. But he might in that event, like the boy down in Hongkong, shoot himself; which wouldn't do. No, nothing to that!

This other, the larger matter, now, was a problem indeed; really as yet only a haze in her sensitive, strangely gifted mind. It put to the test at once her imagination, her instinct for dangerous enterprise, her skill at organizing the sluggish minds of others. It would mean dangerous and intense activity.

She asked, in a careless manner, where the viceroy kept his treasures, and fixed in her mind the place he named: Huang Chow.

The fool was squeezing her fingers now; unquestionably building in his hectic brain an extravagant image of herself; an image wrapped in veils of somewhat tarnished but certainly boyish innocence, sentimentalized, curiously less interesting than the

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complicated wickedness and intrigue of actual human life as it presented itself to her.

When he tried to kiss her she left him, but lingered to listen to his proposal that she should follow him to his own cabin; smiled enigmatically in the dusk beneath the deck light; hummed lightly, pleasingly, as she moved away; and turned to see him bolting for his room.

V

SHE strolled around the deck then. Apparently none other was sitting out. The teachers and the young men were spending the evening, she knew, with Dawley Kane at the consulate. Rocky had got out of that. Tex Connor was in his cabin; reading, doubtless, with his one good eye. For rough as he might be, this gambler and promoter of boxing and wrestling reveled secretly in love-stories. He read them by the hundred, the old-fashioned paper-covered romances and tales and adventures. A pretty able man, Tex Connor; useful in certain sorts of undertakings; certainly useful now; but with that curious romantic strain—a weakness, she felt. And a difficult man, strong, arrogant, leaning on crude power and threats where she leaned on delicately adjusted intrigue. Had Tex known better how to cover his various trails he would be in New York or London now, not out here on the Coast picking up small change. Approaching him would be a bit of a problem; for a year or so their ways, his and hers, had lain far apart. It was not known here on the boat that they were so much as casually acquainted. They bowed at the dining-table; nothing more.

The Manila Kid was in the social hall, rummaging through the shelf of battered and scratched records above the talking machine. A quaint spirit, the Kid; weak, oddly useless, gloomily devoted to music of the simple sort, quite without enterprise. But—by this time the delicate steel machinery of her mind was functioning clearly. He would serve now, if only as a means of solving that first problem of interesting Tex.

She paused in the doorway, caught his furtive eye, and with a slight beckoning movement of her head moved back into the comparative darkness. Slowly, thick-headedly of course, he came out.

"Jim," she said, "I'm wondering if you and Tex wouldn't like to pick up a little money."

"What do you think we are?" he replied, in a guarded, sulky voice. "Tex dropped three thousand at that fight. There's no use talking to him. He's rough—that's what he is."

"Jim"—she considered the man before her deliberately, his lank, spineless figure, his characterless hatchet face—"Jim, send Tex to me."

"Why should I, Dix? Answer me that?"

"Don't act up. I know all about you, Jim. Everything! I'm not talking—but I know. This is a big proposition I've got in mind, and you'll get your share if you come in and stick with me. How about half a million in jewels?"

"I don't know as Tex would care to go in for anything like that. If it's a yegg's job——"

"I'm not a yegg," she replied crisply. "Ask Tex to slip around here. I don't want to talk on that side of the deck."

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"I suppose you wouldn't like young Kane to know what you are—eh?"

"That sort of talk won't get you anywhere, Jim."

"Well, I've got eyes, you know."

"Better learn how to use them. You'd better hurry around to Tex's cabin. We may have to move quickly."

Sulkily the Kid went; and shortly returned.

"Well"—this after a silence—"what did he say? Is he coming?"

"He wants you to go around there—in his stateroom."

"I won't do that. He's got to come here."

This decision lightened somewhat the gloom on the Kid's saturnine countenace. He went again, more briskly.

The girl slipped into her own cabin and consulted a folding-map of China she had there. Huang Chow—she measured roughly from the scale with her thumb—would be seventy or eighty miles upstream from Kui Kiang here, perhaps thirty-five down-stream from Hankow.

TEX was chewing a cigar by the rail. At her step his round, impassive face turned toward her.

She said: "Hello, Tex."

He replied, his one eye fixed on her: "Well, what is this job?"

"Listen, Tex—are you game for a big one?"

"What is it?"

"The revolution's broken out at Hankow—or across at Wuchang——"

"Yes, I know!"

"There's going to be another big battle near Hankow. The Republicans are moving over. Sure to be a mix-up."

"Oh, yes!"

"There'll be loot——"

"Oh, that!"

"Wait. I know where there's a collection of jewels—diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds—all kinds."

"Do you know how to get it?"

"Yes. It's a big thing. We'd be selling stones for years in America, Europe. Will you go in with me, fifty-fifty?"

"What's the risk?"

"Not much—with things so confused. Looks to me like one of those chances that just happens once in a hundred years. Takes some imagination and nerve."

"Where is this stuff?"

"I'll tell you when we get there. You'll have to trust me about that. I've never lied to you, and you have lied to me."

"But——"

"Wait! Listen. Here's the idea. There's a lot of nervous soldiers on this boat that wouldn't mind a little loot of their own. Here's your boxer—what's his name?"

"Tom Sung." Connor's eye never left her face; and she, on her part, never flinched.

"To those soldiers he's the biggest man on earth. *He* wouldn't mind a little clean-up, either. Oh, there's enough, Tex—plenty. You see what I'm getting at. With your Tom for a leader you can pick up a few of those soldiers, enough to get away clean."

"But they're shooting 'em——"

"They shot two. They'd have trouble shooting forty. Make Tom do the work—right now, to-night, while we're lying up here. They'll follow him; and you won't

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have to stand back of him if he's caught. He'll just be one of the rebels then. Get this right, Tex! It's a real chance. You'll never get another like it. With the soldiers we can get a launch—hire it, even, if you want to play safe—and go right up there and get the stuff. Nobody'll ever know it wasn't just a case of soldiers on the loose."

"How're you going to get away? They'd know we weren't here, wouldn't they?"

"Don't try to tell me we couldn't slip out of China if we had to. This isn't England or America. I don't believe we'd even have to. Just a case of playing it right—using your head."

"Where is this place?"

"It's there, and I'll take you to it."

"You'll have to tell me."

Quietly she moved her head in the negative. He would hardly know that the viceroy was not going on through to Hankow and Peking; she had the information herself only from Rocky Kane. Nor would he know, by any chance, the situation of his Excellency's ancestral home. For Tex was not what they termed a "sinologue"; he knew white men and women and yellow servants, the steamers and railways, the gambling-clubs and race-tracks; little else. There was, then, little reason why he should think of the viceroy at all.

"It's anything from half a million up, Tex," she said coolly. "And my information comes straight. I'll prove it by taking the chance with you."

He shook his head; half turned.

"Where is it?"

She smiled.

He left her abruptly then. And coolly she watched him go. It would take a little time for Tex's imagination to rise to it; and until the last moment he would try to bluff her down. It was just poker; they had played that game before, she and Tex. Once he had robbed her. But not this time; not, as she phrased it, if she saw him first.

THE Kid came edging out of the social hall.

"Will he do it?" he whispered hoarsely.

"He says he won't," replied Dixie.

"Say—that's tough. I didn't think Tex would overlook a thing like that. What's the matter?"

Dixie now considered this curiously useless man. Or useless he always seemed to her. Now she was not so sure.

"He makes it a condition that I tell him where the stuff is."

"Well—Dix, you'd tell him that, wouldn't you?" The Kid was whining. "If you really know yourself."

"Of course I won't tell him, Jim. Not yet."

His eyes sank before hers. He fumbled in a pocket; produced a tiny wrist-watch of platinum.

"Look here, Dix," he remarked clumsily, "things ain't always been as pleasant as they might be between you and me, but I was wondering if you wouldn't put this on, for old times' sake, like."

She took the gift, weighed it in her hand.

"Thank you, Jim," she replied. "That's awfully nice of you. Though perhaps I'd better not wear it here on the boat."

"I suppose young Kane might ask questions, eh?"

"Nothing like that. I'll wear it. Here—you snap the catch, Jim."

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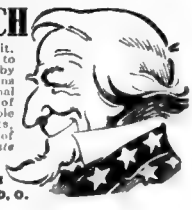

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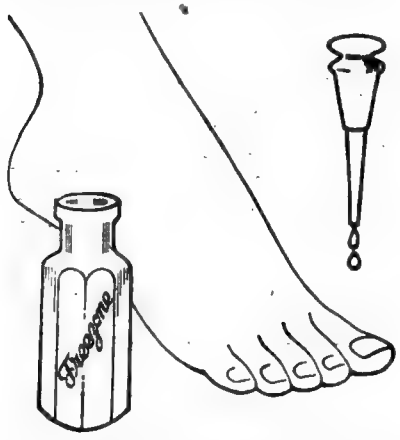

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"I—I might wish it on, Dix, like the kids do."

"All right. Have you wished?"

"Sure. Say, Dix, you won't mind the little place where the initials got scratched off inside the back cover? Nobody'll see that."

"Surely not," said Dixie.

VI

AT A little after midnight Griggsby Doane mounted to the boat-deck and walked quietly aft past the funnels and the engine-room ventilators. A half-moon threw shadows along the bund and among the landing-hulks and the moored, silent sampans, lorchas, junks. The mile-wide river shimmered in a million ripples.

A dark slight figure rose from a skylight.

Hui Fei wore the black jacket and trousers of the lower-class Chinese women below decks. Her head was uncovered, and her hair waved prettily down across the wide forehead. She should have oiled it flat, of course, to complete her disguise; this careless arrangement was charming in the moonlight, but was not Chinese.

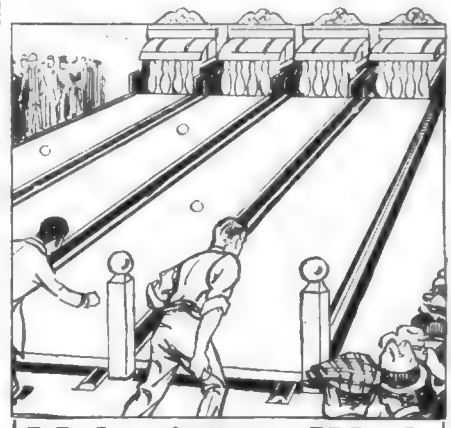
He found himself holding her small hand and looking gravely down at her. He even slowly shook his head.

"You must tell me quickly what you have to say, Miss Hui. As soon as possible you must go back. This is very unsafe."

"Oh, yes," said she. "It will not be long. It is very har' to say. But I am so alone. There is no one to tell me what I mus' do."

She plunged bravely into her story. Her information had come from one or another of her maids. And she had overheard gossip among the mandarins.

The Throne had sent her father the silken cord. She could not discover why. To be sure they called her a secondary devil, meaning one who sympathized with the foreigners. The reactionary Manchus at Peking, reveling and plotting within those sacred walls of the forbidden city, remembered nothing, it appeared, of the recent past. The eunuchs, always the stormy petrels of China's darkest days, were again in power at the palace; the great Empress Dowager, she whom all China termed, half-affectionately, "The Old Bhudda," had given them their head, and now this new young empress with all the arrogance of the Old Bhudda and none of her genius for power or her profound experience, was running wild. And as a consequence, T'ang Chi T'ung, the statesman who more than any other was equipped to counsel her wisely during this stormy time, was returning to the home of his ancestors to die by his own hand. It would be said at the Forbidden City that a gracious Empress Dowager had "permitted" him to go. Doane's disturbed thoughts darted back over the blood-stained recent history of Manchu officialdom. The Old Bhudda had "permitted" Ch'i Ying, late Manchu viceroy of Canton, to slay himself; and had graciously extended the same privilege to others after the Boxer trouble of the year 1900, among them an acquaintance of Doane's, Chao Shu-ch'iao. Others she had decapitated—Yuan Ch'ang, Li Shan, controller of the household, and Hsu Ching, president of the Board of War. She killed, too, Hsu Ching-Ch'eng, who, like T'ang, had held the post of minister in more than one of the capitals of Europe.



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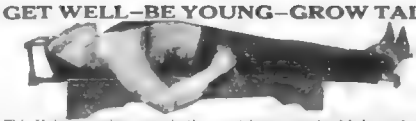

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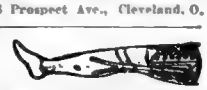

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The only known charge against this Hsu was that he had come to admire foreign customs.

In her narrative the girl spoke only English. Her voice was deep in quality, without heaviness; musical, like most voices among the better-to-do in the Middle Kingdom, Chinese and Manchu alike. And colored now with deep emotion, it had an appealing quality to which Doane found a response—difficult, at the moment, to repress—among his own emotions. He sensed, too, more deeply than before, with a pleasure that was, in his lonely life, stirring, the naïveté of her Western feeling. Standing here in simple native costume, in the heart of Old China, gazing wistfully out over tangled hundreds of sleeping junks and sampans, this girl, freshly out of a Massachusetts college, was pleading against hope that her father might be spared the final jealous vengeance of the mightiest remaining Oriental throne.

The China that Doane had so long known, that had, indeed, for better or worse, been woven into the fiber of his being, was turning suddenly incredible. He stared, more intently than he knew, straight down at the slim little figure—for beside his own huge frame this tall girl appeared as hardly more than a child—at the unadorned face that was softly girlish under the black hair that waved down over the pale forehead and glistened in the moonlight.

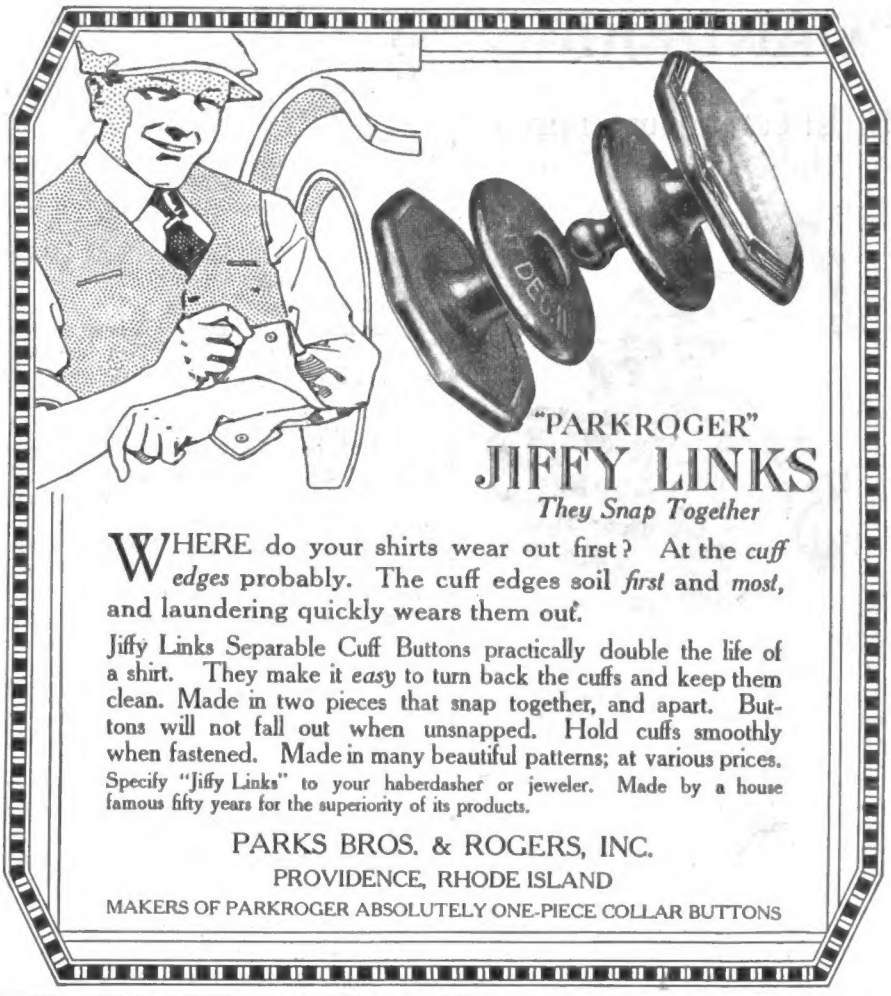
"THEY mean to confisca' "—she left off, in her eagerness to explain, the final "te"—"all his property. Tell me, Mis'er Doane—can they do that?"

He reflected. There would be vast areas of tea-lands and rice-lands, almost innumerable shares in these new corporations, the famous and priceless collections. He inclined his head.

"I'm afraid they could. It would be an outrageous act, but the government now, I'm sorry to say, is in outrageous hands. If the empress is determined, as apparently she is, there are ways enough of getting at all his possessions. Even through the banks." His heart was full, his voice tender; but he could not deceive her. He added a question: "Does his Excellency, your father, know all this?"

She nodded. "I have tol' him. But I canno' make him see it like me. Oh, we are so differen'. I am, you see, an American girl. I am free here," she laid a pretty hand on her breast. "When I try to think of all these dreadful things—of these wicked eunuchs an' the empress who is like thousan' of years ago—blind, childish!—an' the people who canno' yet see it differen'—I get bewilder'. You un'erstan'. You are American, too. I can speak with you. An' my father admires you. If you will only speak with him—if you will only help me make him think differen'."

Doane asked himself what he could do, what she imagined he could do, without influence or money. He quite forgot, in this matter of influence alone, the significance of the viceroy's courtesy, as of Sun Shi-pi's appeal to him. For a little too long he had been a beaten man. It was now dangerously near a habit so to consider himself. And worse, to make active clear thinking impossible, emotion flooded his brain. Gently he asked her what she would have him do.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"He is between the worlds," mused Doane aloud.

"Yes, it is that. An' I, perhaps, am between the worl's."

"And I."

"But he mus' not do it. It is so simple. The throne will no' live. Not one year more. I know that. They are fighting now at Wuchang."

Doane inclined his head. "I know that, Miss Hui, but the revolution has not yet gone so far that success is sure."

"But it is sure. The people will everywhere rise. I know it—here!"

"That is my hope, too. But to stir this great land means so much in effort and education. You have changed, yes. Your father has changed. Sun Yat Sen was educated in a medical school and has lived in America and England; he has changed; but all China—I do not want to dash your hopes, dear Miss Hui, but I fear China is not nearly so far along as you and I would wish."

"Then—even so—mus' my father die because a wicked empress has no brains? It is not right. Listen, please. If you, Mr. Doane, would jus' try to persua' my father! He will listen to you. Oh, if you would stay with us, an' help us. We coul' take some money, some jewels, an' escape down the river—to Shanghai—to Japan, or even America. My father mus' not die like this. There will be a few servan's we can trus'. You speak to my father, sir, an' he will listen. I know that. He says you have the min' of the ol' philosopher—of Lao-tze himself. He said that. An' you have the Western strength that he admires. An' he says you un'erstan' China. Oh, will you speak to him?"

Doane stared out into the luminous night. The response in his breast to her eager youth frightened him now. He had felt of late that life mattered little; certainly not his own. But youth, and hope, and faith—they mattered.

HE TOOK her small hand in his own. His heart was beating high. It was going to be hard, now, to control his voice. He was, then, after all the years, the struggles, the beatings, incurably romantic. Stirred yet by the vibrant pulse of youth that in some men and some women never dies, he himself had thought this negative spirit of the past few years a philosophy, but apparently it was nothing of the sort. Or where was it now? For he was suddenly all nervously alive, a man of vigor and pride, a man of urgent emotional need.

"I will try," he said.

Beyond all thought of self, she clung to his hand. "I have your promise?"

He bowed. "I must think. I should not like to fail. There will be time. He will"—it was hard to phrase this—"he will wait, surely, until he is at home. But you must not stay longer here. And we must not meet again like this. I will try my best to help you."

It seemed a pitifully inadequate speech. But the wild impulse was upon him to clasp her lovely person in his arms—claim

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her, fight for her, live again a man's life through and for her. It was, he deliberately felt, almost insane of him! a man with nothing to offer, not even the great hope of youth, struggling against an emotion, a hunger, that it was grotesque to indulge. He compressed his lips tightly.

She stood by the ladder. She seemed breathless. For a moment she pressed her hands to her cheeks and eyes; then waved a hand to him and went lightly down.

Continued in the November EVERYBODY'S

Home

By Jessica Royer

I. Order

"We shall live better having bled,—"

Faltering then, you laid the book aside,
Carelessly on the table. . . . There it lies
Tumbled and open. Countless times I've tried;
But when
I put the room to rights again,
And seek to discipline its disarray
Each time my eyes
Fill ere I touch it; and I turn away. . . .
So with the mantle where in trailing path
Of ashes lies your pipe; so with the sill
And its untidiness of half-burned matches;
So with your desk whereon a tumbled heap
Of papers lonely company keep
With your blunt pencils. My reluctant hands
Strive vainly to obey Order's demands.
Days pass by and still
Each little thing is quite
As when you left it there on the last night.

But well I know that there will come a day
When Order's god,
Dispassion shod,
Will have his alien way:
When each dear disarray
Will find an ordered place;
And Time, insidiously, will quite efface
These lingering telltales of then and you.
Upon my daily rounds I'll strangely go
In new and unfamiliar ways,
Searching the length of neat to-days
For all the lost untidiness of you.

II. Disarray

There is a room within my heart
That you have made your own;
Where no one enters but yourself,
Whose ways are yours alone.

Therein I find sweet disarray,
No order strange and new;
And there my love betakes itself
To wait—to wait for you.

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